Daniel Taylor Esqr

with the writers best respects

S.L

THE

BANKS OF THE BORO:

A Chronicle

OF

THE COUNTY OF WEXFORD.

BY

PATRICK KENNEDY.

Author of "Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts," &c.

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TO

PATRICK JOSEPH MURRAY, ESQ.

BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

DIRECTOR OF CONVICT PRISONS, AND INSPECTOR OF REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

Dear Sir,

Please to accept this picture of country life, which I offer to you in memory of your kind encouragement of my literary efforts during the nine years' existence of the IRISH QUARTERLY REVIEW. Your patriotic support of that National Journal for so long a period, and your successful efforts in the cause of reformatory schools, well deserve the gratitude of every one of your countrymen; but you have a peculiar claim upon mine for many important personal services.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

PATRICK KENNEDY.

Anglesea-street, Dublin,

August, 1867.

PREFACE.

THE incidents of the following story occurred in the years 1817 and 1818, a short time before the writer came to reside in Dublin. With the exception of two or three flying visits which he paid not long afterwards, he has never since been gladdened by the sight of his native mountains. The manuscript was finished early in June, 1856, and the contents have no reference to matters connected with Wexford which have happened since the date of the tale. The writer is possessed of no reliable information as to the present relations of landlord and tenant in his native county, as to the abandonment of old roads or the positions of new ones. He has never even mastered the *easy* science of political economy, and any Enniscorthy green-grocer, leaning over his half-door on a Sunday evening, is fully qualified to give him a useful lesson on Wexford politics.

The chief incidents, circumstances, and fireside conferences mentioned in this volume really occurred, and the strangest among them are those in which the writer has kept closest to the original facts. He would not have ventured to introduce some of them had they been pure inventions.

The tale is somewhat clogged by various phases and incidents of ordinary country life, but the writer was more

anxious to preserve the faithful memory of these things than to produce a well-constructed story.

The reader is entitled to some apology for the personal intrusion of the chronicler into his history, and here it is. In 1856, when the following pages were written, he neither wished nor expected that his name should ever be seen as author on the title-page of a book. Accordingly, retaining his *alias* of *Harry Whitney*, which he had assumed with his first attempt, "The Legends of Mount Leinster," he ventured to take up a quiet position among the kindly personages of his new drama, saying little and doing less, but still slightly accelerating the progress of the story. By the advice of Mr. Macmillan, the eminent publisher of the "Fictions of the Irish Celts," which appeared last October, he acknowledged the authorship, and any further persistence in disguise would be mere affectation. In revising the manuscript for press he would have removed his *double* altogether, but found that the process would be equivalent to the reconstruction of a considerable portion of the work. For this operation time and patience were needful, and of neither valuable commodity was there any provision at hand. Such being the case the considerate reader will please to show indulgence, and look on the writer as a hearty sympathiser with the spirit of the inscription which, as the late estimable scholar, Mr. Patrick Vincent Fitz-Patrick, author of *Thaumaturgus*, asserted was to be seen in his day on the frieze of the temple at Sais in Egypt:

> "Know all ye who come into the world,
> And all ye who go out,
> That the Gods detest impudence."

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THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

CLOUGHBAWN AND ITS SCHOOL.

It was a fine autumn morning, 1817 or 1818, as a couple of school-fellows and myself were descending the steep way that leads from the village of Courtnacuddy down to the bridge of Och-na-Goppal, and thence up the shady road to the cross of Colaght. How gladly would I look again on the view we had then before us unnoticed and unregarded! On the river banks, beyond the bridge, rose lofty oak, ash, and elm trees, with the sunbeams streaming through the foliage on the rich meadows and the surface of the river; above these lay the spacious garden and ivy-covered ruins of the old castle, and on the high grove-girt lawn to their right stood the modern house of Castleboro. Straight before us, on the castle side of the shady road beyond the bridge, was the large park or field called Glanmuin, and to the left spread thorn-fenced meadows, stretching away to the delightful old farm-house of Mr. Dick Greene, one of our strong gentlemen-farmers. On the severest winter morning the sight of that sunny road, sheltered by its skirting fir-belt, would give us a feeling of comfort as we came down towards the bridge, running at a brisk pace to keep ourselves warm.

Still to the west beyond, and to the right of the castle, lay the townlands of Rathnure, Coolbawn, and Forrestalstown; and on the horizon stretched the White Mountain

ridge and the eminence of Cahir Rua's Den, and on th extreme right rose the lofty rugged mass of Blackstairs.

At the upper or western end of this sunny road it meet the Colaght one, which runs south and north through Lor Carew's demesne, with trees as thick as they can grow o each side. We take the left or southern branch, an leaving on our left-hand Mr. Dick Greene's orchard an the rustic avenue leading down to his house, and on ou right Mr. Watt Greene's large slated house and orchard we cross the brook of Coolbawn and climb the littl eminence to the school: we have been joined by th youngest of Mr. Greene's family at his gate, dear littl Becky, and Richard, and Martha.

In former years our hours of instruction were spent i the chapel, up the shady lane on the left. The school wa a throngly-attended one—the pupils varying in age fro six to twenty years. Instances of immodest speech o action were very rare, the master being absent or present and during my sojourn there for years there was no boxin match to my knowledge; yet I never think of our dail use of the chapel for a school without a feeling of annoy ance. So, though I often felt elated when delivering th speech of *Brutus* or that of *Anthony* from the altar-step and recollect many happy days spent in the gallery, or o the shaded grassy terraces of its yard, I turn with mo pleasure to the secular building which fitted our profan and worldly studies much better.

We are among the first comers, and immediately begi to *rehearse*. By and by, Mr. O'Neil enters, gives us cordial good morning, proceeds to hear off the lessons g out of school, and the Misses Greene repeat their Frenc dialogues.

Some dozen of us, from fourteen to eighteen years of ag retire to an outhouse (its floor covered with straw) rehearse our Latin lessons studied on the previous evenin We have no monitor, but my dear old fellow-studen John D., with whose family the Latin usher lodges, is sup posed to be able "to keep the beam of battle straight amongst us. We get through some fifty or eighty lines o Cæsar, and Sallust, and Virgil; and when we judge th

work efficiently done, we refresh our minds and bodies in this fashion. Every boy has in his pocket a square, that is a quarter of a circle of griddle cake; and any one that chooses commences the game by flinging up a piece of his cake; and then a lively scramble takes place among the straw to seize the coveted morsel. Once the piece is secured, the lucky finder, sitting on his heels, eats it with much gravity. No. 2 flings up his portion, and the scrutiny is renewed; clothes, hands, hats, and faces are treated with little ceremony, and by the time that the last pupil has projected his portion in the air, our faces are flushed, clothes and hair laced with straw, and bones sore, yet through all this severe horse-play not one angry word has been spoken.

There was amongst us a young giant, whom nature had evidently cut out, mind and body, for a farmer; but who was doomed for priesthood by the family decree. We called him "Hoofs," from his enjoying a liberal provision of these appendages, and we occasionally suffered both from his hoofs and his horns. After his parents had lost many years striving to counteract the intentions of Providence, he shaped out his own proper course by marrying a neighbour's daughter, and turned out a good farmer, instead of becoming an ill-conditioned clergyman. It was interesting to see the priestly vocation marked from an early age in one or two others: I never think of one dear fellow-pupil, without bringing before my mind a lively image of innocence, mildness, and piety.

On this particular day we "moderated the rancour" of our exercises, as the "quality" from Castleboro, and some of the gentlemen and ladies of the neighbourhood were expected to an examination.

The school economy, as to the fees, was of a varied character. The poor people on the estate sent their children to receive gratuitous instruction, and those who were able paid, or did not pay, at their own option. Some advanced students, intended for the Church, were learning Latin and Greek, and supported an usher (himself labouring to obtain Holy Orders). He lodged at Morgan D.'s, and gave evening lessons to the young people in that hospita-

ble old farm house. Very little use was made of birch or cane in our academy. Sharing as I do the general feeling of the unfitness of collecting together young people of both sexes to receive a common course of instruction, I look back on my school experience, and can declare with entire truth that very few instances of impropriety in word or action could be reckoned against us.

Our dignified, though affable teacher ("*Master*" in our vernacular) being near-sighted, many things might have passed unnoticed. Still we were in considerable awe, some portion of which probably arose from the respect shewn him by the Family of the Castle, the Greenes, the Robinsons, and the Fitzhenrys.

At last "the quality" were seen coming down the road from Mr. Watt Greene's gate; we all got into order; the door opened, and in walked the gentlemen and ladies. The master received them in his best style; and if being thoroughly at one's ease, unembarrassed by shyness, and gifted with a flow of words, be marks of a good address, Mr. O'Neil had this accomplishment in perfection.

Our gentle visitors soon set us at ease by their courtesy; and examinations in spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, and grammar proceeded. Sometimes the judges would choose to differ on the subject of the relative merits of Laughlin Quigly and Sylvester Quinn, or other rivals, and after a grave weighing and handling of the case, it would be decided that both were best, and consequently entitled to premiums; and so the poor little ragged students and their parents would be in fairy-land for the rest of that day, and many succeeding ones. Due praise and an interesting volume fell to the successful farmer's child, and a good suit of clothes, or at least a pair of shoes, brought warmth and gladness to the cottier's child, and rejoiced the hearts of his parents.

Our visitors took leave after a satisfactory examination, and we all scattered to dine, or enjoy our favorite pastimes.

We who had come from a distance, settled ourselves on the grass, in the shady paddock under Jemmy Carroll's cottage, and enjoyed our bread and milk, drinking the

latter out of a black bottle. When our slight repast was over, we crossed the bridge, and tried each other's powers, leaping the brook, or seeing how far we could go in a *hop, step, and jump;* and we spent a happy hour on the grassy banks, without fear of blame from Mr. Greene. In the season we shot *marvels* on the road, or played *hunt the fox;* and occasionally repaired to the fives-alley of Clonroche, and enjoyed some exciting games in its arena.

When summoned to the afternoon study, there is great inattention for a while, and great wiping of foreheads. The morning scene and mid-day play have unhinged our powers of abstraction. Gradually we become more attentive; the sun has been blazing for some time through the western windows of the room, and at last we get the welcome order for an early dismissal.

On coming down towards the bridge, Dan Mulrony, who had been outdone in the examination by little Laughlin Quigly, though he exceeded him by the head and shoulders, would not let his conqueror enjoy his little triumph, but kept harping on the victory being due to chance, or sleight, or favor: moreover hinting "that there was no merit at all in the matter, seeing that Laughlin was luxuriating each day on good *cups*, while himself was merely kept alive on *English reds;*" and finally adding, "that if Laughlin was nearer his own height, and if he thought it worth his while, what a leathering he would give him!" This was the last straw on the back of our lilliputian camel. He jumped into the middle of the road, buttoned his coat, and invited his bulky antagonist to a trial at the fists, in these unstudied phrases: "You are a big dunce, Dan; ay, and a coward, too, Dan; come on if you dare, Dan; I'll stand my ground, Dan; I'm not a bit afraid of you, Dan; I'll knock an eye out of you, Dan." Dan, not desiring the loss of that useful organ, did not accept the invitation, and we were relieved from his grumblings for the remainder of the walk.

CHAPTER II.

ENTER TWO OF THE PERSONAGES.

Two of our former pupils had came on this day to witness the examination. They were long-tried friends and comrades, though differing in many points of taste and character. They had been together in Mr. Diarmuid K.'s school, at the chapel of Rathnure, and at Mr. Martin Doyle's, of Shanowel, near Tottenham Green, some miles to the south, and had spent their last two seasons of school life at Cloughbawn. They were now variously occupied, Bryan Roche working on his father's farm, not very far from the bridge of Castleboro, and Edward O'Brien teaching a school below Enniscorthy. Edward's home family consisted of father, mother, and sister, the latter aged twenty-three, and little Pat, a boy of ten. Their farm adjoined Bryan's, and it was the general opinion that the old gentleman had a sheaf of bank notes laid aside somewhere or other. However, there was no evidence of this fact in his mode of living, nor in his treatment of his family. Edward having gone through his school career, and not feeling disposed to farm labour, and having no penchant for the duties of a shop-clerk, had assumed the charge of the children of a few Protestant families, to whom he was recommended by Mr. O'Neil. I happened to have been the companion of these young men at Shanowel school, and for the two seasons spent afterwards at Cloughbawn.

The two friends were very dissimilar in appearance. O'Brien was middle-sized and dark of hue, while Roche was fair, tall, and proportionably stout. O'Brien was fond of everything connected with polite letters except the drudgery; but in happy hours, and when need urged, he was not to be dismayed by any amount of mental labour. As to bodily exertion, except in the article of juvenile sports, I am obliged to own that he was most decidedly lazy. Roche, on the other hand, was wedded to farming occupations. He had made a mere respectable progress in school business, and was now likely to lose, for want of exercise, the fruit of some years' study. Edward was

returning to his duties from a trip to Graigue, of which we shall hear more by and by, and availing himself of a short vacation to visit his old teacher and playmates. He had been a sort of general favourite some two or three years past, being always ready to give the master a helping hand in instructing the classes, and likewise a ringleader among the scholars from his activity and skill in all sorts of school pastimes.

From the school till we passed Watt Greene's gate there was no opportunity for confidential talk, as Martha, and Richard, and Rebecca had secured our attention, and were detailing their little grievances and important secrets. Rebecca's grand communication was addressed to myself in these words (she was the youngest of the family): "Now you must not tell Martha, for your life, what I am going to say to you. I was going up the lane there on the right, yesterday, and I was looking among the bushes, and what did I see but a little *ram's* (wren's) nest, and so I stole over, and put my finger in the upper hole, and a nice little ram with a cocked tail jumped out of the other, and there I saw five or six of the dawniest creatures you ever saw in your life in the nest; and I went away for fear I'd make the mother forsake them; and now if you tell Martha she'll tell somebody else, and they will frighten the old bird, and she will forsake the nest, and the little things will die of hunger."

I do not recollect the fate of the little pets, but all this time Martha and Richard had some other weighty secrets to divulge to Edward and Bryan; and when we came to the gate we were secured by Mr. Samuel and Miss Eliza, and treated to some sweet apples. I *wonder* if the figures "1790," cut out in red brick, are still extant on the lofty gable-end wall, and if the apples in the old orchard are as sweet as in the long-vanished days. Kind and affable Mr. and Mrs. Greene, I still cherish your memory, and hereby send my loving regards to as many of your good-natured children as live to read these lines.

Bidding our gentle little friends good bye, we got on to the entrance of the sweet-briar lane that turned down to Mr. Dick Greene's. At that spot there was a deep ditch

between the road and Mr. Greene's orchard; and on the high bank that served for fence were his sons—two fine young men; and for the next four or five exciting minutes there was a lively scene of scrambling among the scholars, young and old, for the nice fruit that was flung out to them by their laughing and generous entertainers; the few girls in our company being exempt from the struggle, as their friends in the corduroys were only too happy to share the spoil with them. When the strife was over, poor James D., who was a great "boast" in his way, and mighty free with his tongue, said something that did not particularly please his cousin *Anty* (Anastasia), a stout handsome little lamb of thirteen. She made no remark, but took him by the collar, and gave him the neatest fall I ever saw inflicted on a boaster.

CHAPTER III.

CASTLEBORO IN OUR YOUTH.

Some of the body turned at the cross of Colaght down the shady road to the bridge, which has been already described; others took the straight road which leads through the demesne, west of the lake and castle, and on to the mill and bridge of Castleboro; and Edward and Bryan took the path that crosses obliquely the great field of Glanmuin, in the direction of the garden, and out-offices, and ruins of the old castle.

My own route was towards the "horse-ford," but on this occasion I took the same path with my two friends, in order to refresh our reminiscences of Shanowel. When we were left to ourselves, I fancied that there was a shade of sadness on Edward's face. It was also noted by Bryan, who began to rally him on the subject. "Ah, Ned, you and I have for ever bade adieu to the happy life of schoolboys. As for myself, however, I feel happy enough. I would sometimes wish the sun lower in the evening, that I might unyoke and have a bit of chat with your mother and Theresa. As for your father, he is so wrapped up in plans for swelling the stocking that's hid away somewhere, that his company is not very amusing. Indeed, I some-

times feel that Theresa is cold enough towards me, and I'm sure she need not. She can't but know the love I have for herself and everything she touches; aye, even the ground which she treads on. She might show a little more *gra* to me. Maybe she likes somebody else, but I can't think that either. No one ever saw her for three minutes in any young man's company. I am sure of you and Mrs. O'Brien's good wishes, but don't know what to make of the old gentleman."

"But what has happened? You seem as if you were just after exploring Cahir Ruadh's den, and had seen some doleful vision there. Have pupils and parents for once agreed in their views on education, and combined to elect a new professor, or have you suffered a barring out? Come, come, reveal your woes like a man!"

"Ah, Bryan, you may joke at your ease. I have incurred responsibilities which I might have avoided; and were it to be done again, I suppose my conduct would be just the same; but the future prospects are very serious looking."

"Oh, dear! what a happy careless life was ours at Shanowel, under the innocent wand of poor Martin Doyle! What a cozy school-house, and what a collection of brave boys and handsome little girls, and what easy duty had Martin to do! He took the world very easy at all events. No whipping, no scolding, his hat evermore on his head, and his cane from January to December under his arm, never in his hand. With what benignity and resignation did he hear the lessons, and how clear and interesting was the lecture on Book-keeping. Well did he simplify its principles to the learners; and when the exercise was over, how complacently he would add—

> Now, my brave Throjans, go study your *lager*,
> And work might and main, as you would for a wager.

"Wasn't it pleasant on a fine summer day to quit the hot school, and lie abroad on the green bank that lay between the unfenced stony lane and the little stream, and work or idle as we pleased! Some good progress we made without doubt; but the catching of *flukes* in the stream under Tottenham Green, and the delights of 'Fox and

Hounds' often interfered with '*Jackson*' and '*Simson*.' You can't but recollect how condescendingly would our worthy 'masther' abridge the evening's exercises when any of his pupils' relations would give him a gentle pressing to take a walk over to the alehouse at the corner of the Old Deer Park. Well, I see you wonder what all this has to do with my late achievements. I must own that it has no connection with them whatever. I had not courage to begin, but now I feel a little warmed; I'll take the bull by the horns. Ah! Harry, you thief, read your story-books, tire yourself leaping and hurling, say your prayers, and avoid the society of girls, big or little. What I preach to you I have not practised myself. St. George for England! Now for the plunge!

"I have, as you know, been for nearly two years with Mr. Jenkins' family at ———, below Enniscorthy. I attend to private tuitions morning and evening, and have a select class in the day; and one of my morning occupations for some time has been to attend Rev. Mr. S.'s little people. We get on pretty well. I suppose they would prefer me to be a Protestant, but I have no complaint to make. The minister and his lady are an amiable pair, and treat their children in a mild and rational manner. Mr. S. was studying the Bible the other morning, while his youngest child was poking in the cinders. Taking his eyes off the book for a moment, he added, 'What are you doing, *Crick?*' 'I am making poteen, father,' said he in a very husky tone; 'Will you have a glass?' 'No,' was the serious reply; 'I will not encourage the manufacture of illicit whiskey.'

"Thomas, the next above him, is all for studying the habits of animals, but he is rather backward at reading. We came the other day to the rhymed alphabet, where the last letter figures thus:

Z was a zebra, and found in Africa.

"'Oh, Mr. O'Brien!' said he, 'did Billy Everett (a bookseller in a neighbouring town) go to Africa to bring home this zebra?'

"John, the eldest, has not so much quicksilver in his veins as Thomas; but he, too, is odd in his own way.

The other day his mamma gave him, for some little fault, a tap on the cheek that would have crushed the wing of a butterfly, and then walked very majestically out of the room. He was so astonished by this unusual proceeding, that he looked after her in the greatest amaze for about ten seconds; but then, seeming to recover his presence of mind, he remarked, 'I suppose she thinks she is very clever after that.' I am sure you would have pitied poor Miss Dorothy if you had seen her distress one evening about a fortnight since. I had given her too long an exercise, or she was not in the vein of study; so after many uneasy symptoms she cried out, 'Oh! how I wish that I'd die to-night, and be buried to-morrow, and be rotting in my grave all the days of my life!'

"And this brings nice little Master Ben before me, with his tight plaid dress and bare arms. He was very busy one day, and contrary to his custom, was very quiet in the corner. At last he came over to me with a face of triumph, exhibiting a pair of corks, joined by an open work circular wall of needles, on pretence of its being a fly-cage; and joyfully cried out, 'Could you do such a thing as that, sir?"

Bryan.—Tell us what sort of people are these old Palatine families to live with.

Edward.—Faith, they are very like the better sort of our own people, a little staider in their manner, and not so easily put in a passion, that's all. The head of one of the houses is a regular jolly Paddy as ever you saw, in spite of his very Scotch name. The young folk do not get as many thumps as ours; but they are kept too long at church on Sundays.

H. W.—Oh, dear! this is all very edifying, but what about the little secret you were going to tell us?

Bryan.—Ned reminds me of a man that took half a mile of a run to jump over a trench. The story will be good when it comes.

We had got to the further side of Glanmuin at this time, with the wooded banks of the Boro below at our right, and a straight avenue before us, passing the extensive garden before mentioned. I trembled for the chance of the pro-

mised communication for that evening at least when I saw coming out of the gate Charley Redmond, one of the young assistants, a most restless and good-humoured individual, his chief pleasure consisting in bodily feats, and in detailing extravagant facts. It must be said to his praise that of two stories,—the one fact, the other fiction, and both equally interesting,—he always preferred relating the true one. He was a favourite with most of the people about the castle, and was looked on with regard by the gentlemen; as among a society whose conscientiousness in small things had been only imperfectly developed, he really felt it a case for confession if he did not discharge his duty to his employers, or if he saw them injured by theft or neglect, when he could prevent it.

He now began to tell us in great glee the disappointment of a knavish boy, who, being lately appointed to watch the fruit at night, had wheeled a barrow full of the best he could find out through the door in the lower wall, and hid them very safely, as he thought, in a clump of young saplings, with long grass all round them. The evening of the next day he came to look after his treasure, but the pigs had been before him. There wasn't as much as the skin of one of them left for the young rogue.

By the time the story was ended we had got through the yard, with the old castle on one side, and were out on the slope above the stream that runs from the lake down to the Boro.

The old lawn, with its big trees, stretched away on our left side, the lake flashed under the rays of the sinking sun, and on the farther bank and higher on the new lawn loomed the great, square, modern building. The fir grove encircling the north side of this lawn swept down along the river bank towards our right; the evening rays just glancing on the tops of the dark firs, tinging the outlines and roof of the castle, and darting through the lofty trees that fringed the lower border of the lake, where its waters were confined by a massive dam.

These trees being just in front of us as we looked towards the building, the great breadth of shade formed by the partly opaque mass, and the broad shadows flung on

the grassy bank and the stony bed below the dam, brought out in soft and bright relief the green velvety carpet of the lawn on which we were reposing to enjoy the view. And what a lovely effect was produced in the clump of trees by the transparent yellowish green, where the thinner screen of leaves allowed the rays to pass through, contrasted with the dark stems shooting up till lost in the thicker foliage overhead.

The extensive new stables and garden had begun to occupy the castle side of the stream before this time, but I love rather to dwell on the old picture formed by the smooth turfy slopes and the great trees, that stood here and there.

Having passed down the lawn and across the bridge, our friend Redmond left us to give in some report to his chief in the new garden, while we took the gravelled walk across the lawn on the north of the castle, and down the path in the thick fir-grove that leads to the bridge and mill. Edward being urged to commence his tale, took heart of grace at last, and began the recital as we leisurely trod the skirting walk of the lawn, with the golden light of evening around us, and then passed into the dark grove, where the walk was thickly strewed with withered fir leaves, if leaves they may be called.

CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD COMMENCES HIS STORY.

"I HAD been about a year in my new employment, when, after closing my little seminary one evening, I joined Mr. Jenkins' family in the harvest field. I found the usual group, enlarged by the presence of a young girl of middle size, well formed, and presenting in features the usual type of Irish comeliness, large soft eyes, full lips, cheeks well coloured, and hair of a chesnut hue. I do not recollect how we were thrown into each other's society that evening, and other succeeding ones. There was a charm in the soft expression of her face, and her sweet-toned voice, which won upon my heart from the evening on which my eyes first rested upon her. She was there only in the rank of

servant, but on enquiry I found that she belonged to a respectable Protestant family in reduced circumstances.

"One Sunday evening as she and I, and some of the younger folk, were on a walk to visit a sick neighbour, Mr. Jenkins's eldest son and a companion of his darted out from behind a tree, and so startled us that Eliza gave a scream, and flew to the other side of the road; and the young man I mentioned sprang over, and secured her society for the rest of the walk. She did not seem as cold with him as I could wish, and I was left alone to balance the pleasures and discomforts of the walk. I really felt on that occasion some unmistakeably jealous pangs, and when an opportunity next occurred I did not seek to conceal my disapproval and chagrin.

"I am not able to tell how she contrived to remove this disagreeable sensation, but removed it was; and thenceforward I lost no opportunity of assisting her in her occupations when I fancied that my doing so would not be remarked, or of purchasing some trifling present for her, such as a ribbon or a little pocket book. I often dwell with pleasure on the form and colours of her Sunday bonnet, adorned with one of these same white, red, and green coloured ribbons.

"One Saturday afternoon, finding that Mrs. Jenkins had gone into town, accompanied by her daughter and Eliza, I walked in the same direction, and by good fortune met them on the point of returning home; and we managed, without much appearance of contrivance, to walk together for a good part of the way back.

"I shall never forget that evening; it was just such a calm sunny one as this, the most of the road being in shadow, and the tops of the hedges, and the trees, and the fields on the other side of the Slaney, smiling in the evening sun-light.

"All the sounds audible were of a happy, pleasing character; the distant bark of a dog, the rumbling of a car on the road, the gurgling of the Slaney, and the lowing of cows returning from pastures. Our companions kept a little in advance, or rather we kept a little in the rear; and the low murmuring sound of my dear one's voice, the

loving character of the conversation, the occasional glimpses of her mild, sweet face, and a loving pressure of her hand when it could pass unnoticed, produced a state of pure, deep enjoyment such as I had never felt till then.

"Up to this time the exhibition of our feelings towards each other was of an uncertain though interesting and tender character, but afterwards our discourse and demeanour to each other were those of declared lovers. The only bitter ingredient now was the difference in our religions, but on one occasion, when the subject was started, she promised me that in case we were ever to be united, there should be only one path to our dwelling.

"This state of happiness was not appointed to endure. Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins began to suspect our attachment, and judging that a union between us was not desirable, but yet not willing to use any avoidable harshness, procured a situation for Eliza with their son-in-law, who lived convenient to Carrick Ruadh; and sent her thither during one of my temporary home visits. When I returned and found her place vacant, I felt as a wayfarer who has been leisurely straying through lovely sun-lighted scenery, when he enters on a boundless waste, with a lead-colored sky over him. The day now seemed endless, and ordinary occupations intolerable; and after a month's endurance I determined that, come what might, I would once more gaze on that loved form and face; so, taking a temporary leave of my pupils, I started on a foggy winter's morning for her residence.

"I had been up to that time unwilling to write for fear the message might come into the wrong hands, and, besides, the receipt of a letter by a young girl in her sphere of life would be sure to awaken all sorts of surmises and inquiries. So trusting for an unwitnessed interview to whatever influence watches over lovers, I pushed briskly forward, but with a disagreeable beating of my heart at times. I came into Enniscorthy through the lovely scenery that spreads on the west bank of the Slaney below the town; but the season being winter, and the sky over-clouded, and my mind terribly pre-occupied, I was not much enlivened by the prospect.

"I took a hurried breakfast in the neighbourhood of the finely preserved castle built by Gerald de Prendergast, but I bestowed very little thought upon his wars, his loves, or his griefs; nor reflected that in some years hence my present anxiety would be as little remembered as his fame has been for seven hundred years past.

"Resuming my journey, I descended the steep castle hill, crossed the old narrow bridge, went up the bye-way by Shiel's well, with its ever icy-cold water, gave a backward glance at the grey castle-walls and the well-sheltered garden and flat green island above the bridge, the rushing waters of the river, the hilly, irregular streets, with the grey and red roofs and white walls of the houses, and the morning smoke struggling up through the leaden atmosphere, and thought of the hundreds of hearts and heads within these walls, some waking up to enjoyment, and many others to anxiety and sorrow.

"Vinegar-hill, of bloody memory, with its wind-mill tower, in which no grain was ever ground, was now passed on my left hand, and for three long hours I was trudging through strange villages, along miry roads, and amid scenery uninteresting enough in my present frame of feeling. I passed Clondaw, the chapel of Boolavogue, the Harrow, and Clorogue chapel, the rugged Carrick Ruadh still acting as my land-mark. Having arrived within half a mile of my goal, I seduced an urchin to go forward and privately acquaint Eliza that a friend of hers wished to speak to her. Now there were ten chances to one that her mistress might get the message instead of herself, or that she might be watched, or might be absent. How can I give you an idea of the state of my mind while waiting on fate's decree under a rueful hedge, and in a drizzling shower?

"After a lapse of what seemed two hours, but which, I suppose, did not exceed twenty minutes, I was blessed by the sight of my darling hastening to me. How lovely seemed her flushed face, how graceful her figure, and how dear was the grasp of that hand, not pressed for four long weeks! Our conversation for the ten or fifteen minutes that her mistress and the fates allowed, consisted of broken

sentences, but how much did it exceed the most eloquent language that ever fell from the lips of orator! One thing, however, was resolved on; to live much longer apart was simply intolerable. So when the next two months came to an end, Eliza would proceed to the old town of Graigue to visit a young girl who was now living in the same house with her, but was about leaving, and with whom she had formed a tender friendship.

"It was settled that on a certain day we should meet at *The Iron Forge*, and proceed together till I should see her safe with her friend, with or near whom she was to live openly as a Catholic for a twelvemonth; and then we could be married without perilling the safety of the officiating clergyman. So the awful engagement was made. We could see nothing in the future but enduring love and fidelity; and objections of parents, fear of poverty, disagreement, all vanished from the enchanted circle in which we existed for the time. In speaking this way of mutual feeling, I can, of course, only be certain of my own, but still I am thoroughly confident that my love is truly shared and returned. As she could not well prolong her stay without risk of discovery and blame, we strove to give each other that courage which neither of us felt, and at last parted with very heavy hearts.

"Ah! how dreary seemed the homeward road after the pleasurable excitement of the first half-hour!—that road now rendered more dreary by the drizzling rain that fell on me unrelentingly for fifteen miles. I was soon soaked to the shirt, and my feet were in an uncomfortable state from wet and mire. How I pity a pin-maker or a handicraftsman who has but a mere mechanical process to occupy his hands, while his mind is insensible to healthy action of any kind. While performing that weary and monotonous journey, I felt some, but only some, of that mental dreariness, for my mind rested with pleasure at intervals on the late interview, and anticipated the happiness of the coming fine long day, when we could enjoy each other's society without fear or doubt.

"Still the rain beat on my face, and my powers were diminishing, and every mile seemed increasing in length.

I left behind me in succession, Enniscorthy, which I passed through after nightfall, the Daphney, Scobie, the steep hill of Moneyhore, the furzy valley and mill of Dranagh, the village of Courtnacuddy, with the sparkles flashing from the door of Jem Behan's forge, through the soft, heavy rain. Nothing was now left to overcome but the long level strip of road to Rathphelim, and the remaining short trip; and welcome was the light shining through our kitchen window, when I was near home. I fear I made a very indifferent return to the warm reception given me by my mother and Theresa. I strove to say a moiety of my accustomed prayers, and got into bed at once, leaving my wet clothes to the care of the women. A deep sleep fell on me the moment I was at rest, but I was roused very unwillingly from it in about half an hour to take a slight supper. I got through the operation half asleep, and was again wrapped in forgetfulness, which endured for nine hours. On awaking I experienced the feeling of one who finds himself aroused after a sleep of three weeks, and feels that a wide chasm has separated him in the interim from human interest. I was conscious of having passed through a state of mental anxiety and bodily fatigue, but all distinct memory of the incidents of the past day was for the moment beyond my grasp. By degrees consciousness returned, and with it a deep feeling of depression."

CHAPTER V.

A SOCIAL EVENING MEAL.

We were now upon Castleboro bridge, looking down upon the troubled and rocky course of the river, the fir-covered hill, down which we had come, being on our right, and on the other side of the stream the mill and comfortable dwelling-house of Mr. Graham, steward of the estate. One road here went westwards, parallel to the Boro (a young wood lying on the slope between road and river), till it joined the Bunclody and Ross high-road. On the other side of the bridge the way stretched eastwards through Courtnacuddy to Enniscorthy. A landscape painter had the materials of a good picture here if he took his stand

a field or so up from the bridge, with his foreground of *inch* and stream and browsing cattle, light warm mass of stone and earthy bank in and about the bridge, and the tawney scarped cutting, where the grove towers above the road, relieved by the dark green and brown of the firs, and these again so well contrasted with the softer-looking foliage of the ash-trees on the mill-side of the river.

Here I would have parted from my friends, but Bryan insisted on Edward and myself spending the evening at his father's; and Charles Redmond, just then passing homewards to Courtuacuddy, was obliged to be my companion, a young boy who accompanied him undertaking to satisfy our parents as to our whereabouts.

We accordingly proceeded to Bryan's, the conversation becoming general. And now the considerate reader is called on to excuse any further map-making on this occasion for something like the reason given in a song composed by one of the Cloughbawn students. Alluding to the abode of the heroine, he thus concluded his lay—

"It is not my intention her honoured name to mention,
For fear many suitors might come
To supplicate her favour, and view her habitation,
Like Penelope, both morning and noon.
From the top of Mount Leinster her mansion you might see,
Between the river Boro and the lofty hill of Brie;
Were I to gain her favour, from all trouble I'd be free,
And expire in yon valley so green."

My old schoolfellow has nearly strained his poetic license in this instance to the very point of tearing. From the relative positions of the mountain and plain, I would defy even a poet, unless aided by a special good telescope, to discover the lady's abode. There would be some shadow of probability if he had substituted Brie itself, or Raheenahoun, or Vinegar-hill, or Cooliah, or even Blackstairs, but then the poetry would suffer. So let my friend obtain indulgence; he did not intend to instruct little boys and girls in geography.

I will only add that the farm steading was of the usual country fashion. Built on a slope, a brawling stream ran below, and a bushy hill rose on the opposite side. ing snug little orchard and cabbage-garden and haggard waters. on my

the rere of the dwelling, the barn, the cow-house, and stable, which inclosed three sides of the spacious lawn—the fourth being bounded by a low wall, with a gate in its centre.

In the circle of my country acquaintance, Mr. Roche, senior, was the gentlest, the most equable, and the most really pious character I had ever the good fortune to know. He bore but a very moderate share in the evening conversation round his hearth, being often absorbed in mental prayer. His face was the index of the calm and peaceable soul within. I have never been able to imagine how he and his robust, sturdy, well-looking wife, came to put their necks under the same yoke. It may, however, be supposed that youth, and the natural wish to please, and the inevitable ignorance of the wiles and ways of the other sex, from which young *courtiers* suffer, had some influence in the matter. We knew them not till several years after marriage, when character and manner had assumed a confirmed form and direction.

The house was furnished with what would be called in towns the first floor, or attic, there being but one such flat over the good level, clay floor; but in our little world it was "the loft." It was approached by a flight of stairs in the corner of the kitchen, and the recess under the same stairs was found very convenient for the stowing of pots, keelers, and other utensils.

We were ushered into the parlour on our arrival, and welcomed by the hearty and hospitable mistress, and found assembled Mr. Roche senior, the juniors of the two families, and Mrs. O'Brien and Theresa, to whom our stout-built school-fellow was so tenderly attached. Edward, and Charley, and myself were hopeful of his affection being returned; but the lady was of reserved habits, and though we were certain of her firmness and constancy to any resolution once made, we were also aware of her caution in forming such resolution.

I would be glad to give my readers a lively picture of her as she then appeared to me, with the serious character Coher sweet features enlivened by the sight of her true-the mad lover; but it is now many years since I saw her,

and the tints and outlines of her countenance have become dim on the tablet of memory. I can only present her as having her abundant dark brown hair tied at the back of her graceful head in the mode of antique Greek statues and Irish country girls; her forehead smooth and round; her eyebrows and eyelashes dark and finely formed; her eyes large, and with a serious and tender expression; her cheeks with oval contour and slight tinge of colour; nose straight; mouth and chin such as you, my young friend, would wish to see gracing your betrothed, voice low, demeanor gentle and reserved, and dress, that of the farmers' daughters of our province.

I have been looking out for some time for a face among my Dublin acquaintance that might enable me to put some living touches to this picture, but have not succeeded. I have also examined some portraits, and lost my labour. Coming lately through Westmoreland-street, I stopped to look at the *Nymph of the Ocean Wave*, *The Wild Wood-rose*, *The Hourie of the Harvest Home*, and other delicately-featured beauties gracing the fronts of music pieces; but felt assured that these well-coloured sketches bore no resemblance to any individual beauty that ever breathed. So I console myself with this reflection, that were I to paint Theresa's countenance in words, with the most patient exactness, neither Smith, Hayes, Lover, Rothwell, nor Burton would depict her likeness on canvas, ivory, or paper from my laboured and futile efforts. Some years since, indeed, I saw in the Hibernian Academy a nameless portrait by Catterson Smith; I wish I was the owner of it. I would get it engraved for a frontispiece to this book, and omit my washy verbal likeness. There was the same combination of sweet features, and the mild and almost melancholy expression of the whole countenance; but Theresa's face was not always sedate, and was seldom melancholy. On occasions when some well-meant effort of Bryan to give her pleasure, produced only a ridiculous result, or when some piece of waggery was executed by Redmond, how silvery was the laugh, or how sweet the smile dimpling over the lovely features, just like a ripple on clear waters. My own private opinion, which I will not enforce on my

gentle readers, in this matter is, that when voice and countenance correspond, the laugh of a beautiful woman is the sweetest music in the world.

I felt certain of my friend's good fortune if (as I hoped) her heart was interested in his favour. I was aware of her good qualities as daughter and sister, of her unassuming manners, true piety, and goodness of heart; and was ready to guess at her constancy and depth of affection, where it would be bestowed, and her power of enduring the ordinary trials of life with patience and submission. The greeting between my big school-mate and Mrs. O'Brien was very cordial; but he approached Theresa with diffidence, and the ordinary salutation and shaking of hands was accomplished with some awkwardness on both sides, in the proportion of four parts to the gentleman's account, and one to the lady's.

Though it was harvest time, there was a fire in the grate, as the season was partially wet, and as the room was not in daily use, and the floor was clay. A heavy, round oak table occupied the middle of the parlour, and it was soon charged with plates heaped with fresh, hot wheat cakes split in the middle, and the insides well provisioned with butter. There was no opportunity for that dreadful state of weariness in which, as I have read in novels, great people are enveloped during the short period that precedes dinner, for Mrs. Roche and her maid were occupied in fitting out the tea-table; Mrs. O'Brien was lending a helping hand; Theresa was requested to preside over the tea-pot, and Bryan and Edward were quite ready for the office of handing round the plates and tea-cups. Ah! what a shock some grand ladies would receive could they but "let into their delicate imaginations" the quantity of cream and sugar that was consumed!

Now, as all of our company were better used to good stirabout, and potatoes and milk, for their ordinary daily fare, they enjoyed the present festival as much as a Dublin citizen does his occasional roast wild-fowl, real turtle soup, and champagne; or as fine ladies and gentlemen do a breakfast at an open-air party, with their admirers by their sides. If any subject of discourse was started, or story

begun to be told, there was no end to the interruptions, arising from cordial pressing on the one side, and modest excuses on the other, or exhortations to the young men to be more alive to their duties—exhortations very needless, indeed, as far as Bryan was concerned.

Mr. Roche, senior, having known H. W.'s relatives of Coolcul, with whom he abode while himself and his two comrades were practising *book-keeping* and *prison bars* in Shanowel, was enquiring about themselves and their affairs, and information was given about them in a very fragmentary style, somewhat in this fashion.

CHAPTER V.

A UNITED FAMILY.

H. W.—So the two brothers Murphy were married to my father's first cousins, Peggy and Polly K., and all lived together in the old manor-house at Coolcul, as you go from Taghmon to Goff's Bridge. In process of time—

Mrs. Roche.—I think it is time for the tea to be drawn. Bryan, will you lay the tea-pot before Theresa, and fill it, and don't spill any of the boiling water on her gown or your own shoes, if you can help it.

Bryan runs in a fluster to execute the welcome order, and, by good fortune, does not scald any one.

H. W.—An increase coming in the two families, and the labourers and servants being many, they built up a partition, and pretended to live apart. Ah, what a loving pair of families they were!

Mrs. Roche.—Perhaps Bryan is in love. He has supplied the slop-bowl with cream, instead of attending to the wants of Charley's cup; what can that betoken?

H. W.—Things were not at the worst till the marriages of the grown-up children, for then they were obliged to remove, one to the south fence of the orchard, the other to the west end of the great bawn. Now, one of the brides being from the barony of Forth—

Mrs. Roche.—Harry, I wish you would take your tea while it is hot. You never know when to stop once you take a story in hand.

A few gulps are taken by way of get off.

H. W.—From the barony of Forth, as I said, and a thrifty dame by right of Barony she was, and the very reverse of her new connections in disposition.

Mr. Roche.—Indeed I don't wonder at it. Her Barony may serve for a pattern of care and good management to the rest of the county, and all Ireland into the bargain. They produce great quantities of beans, and often use no firing but the dry bean-stalks; and as soon as the pot is boiled, out goes the fire. Then, if a farmer or his sons come in wet, and find no fire, they throw off their damp clothes, and put on dry ones, and fall to some job that can be done within the house. People of the neighbouring baronies call them *Beany Bags* in derision of their saving habits. I wish they were as ready to imitate their example as to call them nick-names. It is curious, if what people say of them be true, that till lately the Barony of Forth furnished more young priests than all the rest of the province of Leinster.

Charley.—Small thanks to them for being saving and devout; don't they eat four meals in the twenty-four hours? One of *the Ninety-Eight* men once told me that at the retreat of Fookes's Mill he saw a stout young Barony man crying, as if his heart would break. 'What's the matter with you, man,' said he, 'is it afraid you are?' 'N-n-no indeed, not a bit. I am no more afraid than yourself,' was the reply; 'but I did not eat a bit these four hours.'

Mrs. O'Brien.—This is another story that people tell about them. Some time before the rebellion, a legacy was left to a farmer in Forth, but he would have to go up to Dublin to get possession. Neither himself nor any of his neighbours had ever been beyond Wexford town; and the perils of the journey seemed so great that it was argued in the whole neighbourhood, pro and con, for a fortnight, whether the prize was worth the risk to be incurred. At last it was settled on that prayers should be offered up in all the neighbouring churches and chapels for the safety of the daring adventurer; and then he might, perhaps, set out with a reasonable prospect of a safe return. Now,

Harry, if you have not lost the thread of your story, you may go on.

H. W.—She did not at all understand how her husband could coolly walk into the *big house* after his day's work and dawdle there for an hour, while herself and her two little children seemed clean and clear forgotton. Often and often had she to send across the orchard for Denis when her patience was too far tried.

Mrs. R.—How often have I to ask you, Edward, to make yourself at home, and take your tea and cake as if you were welcome?

Edward (*in a reverie*).—'Deed, ma'am, I was just then thinking of Scollagh Gap—(*recollecting himself*)—I mean I was thinking of an old hospitable Duffrey woman. When the potatoes were putting down to boil, she would always cry out, 'put more in the pot; maybe some one is coming down Scollagh this minute as hungry as a hunter.' This was pretence; the reader will know in due course the train of ideas that had conveyed him to that locality.

H. W.—Often would Peggy say, 'Oh dear, was there ever such a man! Instead of being glad to get home to his wife and children after his day's ploughing, off he makes to his mother, and brothers, and cousins, that he ought to be tired of long since, I'm sure.' All was useless; the evening gatherings went on as usual, till after several threatenings, she really left the house at last, and went home to her mother's, vowing she would never return, unless Denis reformed his sauntering habits, and gave his own family more of his company. What was her vexation next evening, when driven back by the strong feelings of wife and mother, to find Denis pleasantly rocking one child that had been lately weaned, and singing *The Colleen Bawn* to the other, who was sitting on his knee, and nestling in his bosom; especially as he exhibited neither pleasure nor displeasure at the return of his life's partner. 'Ah, you unfeeling man!' said she, with tears coming down fast, 'you hadn't even the good-nature to your children to follow me and bring me back to them.' 'By the life, Peggy,' said he, 'I was getting quite comfortably into the knack of house-keeping. I think if you

had staid for a day or two more you might have kept away altogether. She had thought that she was badly off before, but this completed the measure of her wrongs. She had a terrible struggle with her resentful feelings, but love for husband and children prevailed; and she afterwards quietly submitted to her fate. Well, it was not a lot to be despised after all. Denis never said a cross word, nor did an actual unkindness to her; he was inattentive on occasions, that's all, but he always valued her good-natured and thrifty qualities. If she had entered more into the circle of family affections, and endeavoured to take an interest in their traditions, he would have valued her much more.

Mrs. Roche.—What a poor creature your Mrs. Peggy was! Och! if I had been in her place for one week without teaching Mr. Denis his duty to his wedded wife, I'd never ask to show my face at fair or market while I lived!

Some of the company here took a passing glance at the lady's helpmate, but the unruffled face showed that his feelings had received no shock. Indeed, while he left his mistress full rule over her own department, and a little beyond it, there were points on which his word was law; and if a case of morality or religion was in question he was firm as a tower.

Theresa.—Bryan, will you please to hand over your father's tea-cup?

Mr. Roche.—First tell me how many I have taken; I forgot to count them. 'Two small ones only.' Oh, in that case you may give me another. While Harry was telling us of my old friends the Murphys, I was reflecting how we ought, in our transactions, to take our neighbour's feelings and interest into account as well as our own.

Margaret Roche (a child of ten).—Oh! I wish the wheat would be malty every year; how sweet it makes the bread taste.

Edward.—I can sympathise with you, Peggy. I remember when Bryan and myself were looking out for your grandfather's death, to have the glory, pleasure, and excitement of a wake.

Mrs. O'Brien.—That reminds me of poor Shān Ragireen, that is *taken very bad,* and lying at Pedher Mōr's; he can't hold out long. I'll engage there are some notes and guineas quilted in his old clothes, whoever has the courage to handle them after his death.

Redmond.—Shan was eating his breakfast in Father Rogers's kitchen in Tomanearly one morning, while the Priest was reading his office by the aid of his spectacles at a little table. 'Ah, then, Sir, honey,' said Shān, 'what is the use of them glasses?' 'Don't you know well enough, Shān, that they make the letters look big?' 'Musha, then, maybe you'd lend them to a body, if your Reverence pleases.' 'And what could you do with them, Shān, if I did?' 'Ah, then, sir, wouldn't I make these *pyaties* look as big as I could, for they're mortial small as it is." So the poor priest was defeated, and something more acceptable to Shān than the small potatoes, was ordered for his repast.

Mr. Roche.—Poor Shān! he has suffered as much from cold, and hunger, and trouble to put by this hoard, as saints and martyrs to secure their salvation; and now, unless for God's mercy, his dying thoughts will be occupied with this useless dirt, and none can be spared for the safety of his poor soul. May he avail himself of God's goodness, which never deserts us to the latest moment of our lives; and may we all learn to value worldly things at their proper worth.

The attention of the simple, devout man now seemed for about half a minute as abstracted from the company and the conversation, as if he was completely alone; for owing to the constant exercise of mental prayer, it was a matter of the most ordinary occurrence with him to have some passage in the life of our Saviour, or a vision of heaven, or death, or judgment, so present to his imagination, as to render him insensible to the presence of the surrounding persons or objects.

CHAPTER VI.

MASTERS AND WORKMEN.

Redmond.—I suppose that if a part of school business lay in the education of our consciences, there would be fewer injuries done, and more indulgence shown to other people's feelings. Mrs. O'Brien, if I only knew where Sleeveen, your cottier man, and his friends, *Murtheen Caol* and *Shemus Fadh*, went to school in their youth, I'd take care not to send my own children (when I happen to have any) to their school-master's son. Ah, if you had been in the big kitchen at the castle, one cold day last winter, when the three were called in to clear out the ash-pit! They were so delighted with the ease of the task and the agreeable warmth of the place, and the opportunity of talking to the servants as they passed to and fro, that I am sure the owner of the castle was not half so happy for the time. When a shovelful of the dry ashes was to be raised, they first took a lazy hold of the shovel, and then sloped it after a due pause to a proper angle with the floor, and rested it on the edge of the pit. A vigorous push next sunk the blade half way in the dry heap, and the operator took a glance round the many-sided room, and indulged in some sly jest, or paid a compliment to pretty Biddy Foran.

"Recalled to the business on hands, the shovel at the next stage was driven home, and after some ingenious manœuvres, was at last transferred full of ashes to the basket. Ah, the thieves! I'll never forget the office they forced on me last winter, and the way I got, or properly speaking, was pulled out of it. Mr. Larkin gave me in charge to settle the boundary walk in the old castle lawn, the work being near the Colaght road, and in full view of the castle, looking across the lake. The three heroes I was speaking of were placed under my command, after they had stuffed themselves with the finest black potatoes, roasted at the big fire in the old garden, and the best of new milk which they had cajoled out of the dairy girls. Well, the gravel was there in heaps, and the implements ready, and I requested the three old

boys to commence like Trojans. 'Talk is cheap, my fine fellow," says Sleeveen. "How could any one preserve his health if he went to work so soon after his meals? If them thoughtless girls had even put some water into that fat milk they gave us we'd be the lighter for business, but it can't be helped now; and if we were to go labour hard we'd maybe get a fit of sickness, and not be able to do our duty to 'the master' for many a long day! long life to him! You need not look so contankerous, you little jackanapes. If you know when you are well get up in that tree, where you'll have a full view of the castle. You'll see when the old gentleman gets on the pony to go his morning rounds, and then you may waken us up. *Be the laws*, if you don't make more haste we'll give you a cobbing, and I think you know how pleasant that is."

Mrs. Roche.—Pray, Charley, how do they cob an offender?

Charley.—They draw the trousers very tight round the thick part of the thigh, and then slap the swelled muscles with all their force. Mrs. Roche, your arms are none of the puniest. [The lady appealed to exhibited part of a well rounded white arm, which fully bore out Charley's encomium.] If Bryan ever takes it into his head to despise any neighbour's child that you know to be good enough for him, and offers to go a courting into Carlow, either by the *Raimshach*, or through *Mam a Chulia*, perform this operation on him. I'll bear a hand if I can be got within a call, and if we don't bring him to a pitch of modesty, there is not a cottoner in Cork.

Bryan gave a hearty laugh at the idea of the very unlikely delinquency, and Theresa's eyes rested on him for a moment with so sweet and confiding an expression that a flying glimpse which he caught set his cup of happiness overflowing. However, he became for the moment the butt of sundry pleasantries, such as these: 'Ah, then, Bryan, sure the new bride won't go to Cloughbawn of a Sunday with nothing but a cap on her head!" "Will she speak *Irish*, do you think?' 'Well, well, don't be too hard on the young man; where there's muck there's luck; better be vulgar and have a well-filled stocking, than be poor and proud like the Moneytummer people.' Well,

for my part, I am of the opinion of *Lord Thomas* in the old ballad :

> "Her oxen may die in the house, Billy,
> Her kine within the byre ;
> And I shall have nothing to myself
> But a fat fadge by the fire."

The shadow of the sweet smile which Bryan had secured enabled him to endure this pitiless shower till Charles thought fit to resume his story.

Charley.—Though I was unwilling to neglect my duty, I am sorry to confess that the dread of the cobbing drove me up into the tree, and down lay my three lazy vagabonds in the susnhiny morning on the sheltery sod, and before you could say "Jackstones" they were as fast as a church. Well, I began to think how pleasant it would be to be obliged to tell this breach of duty at my next confession, and to have neither profit nor pleasure by it. However, keeping my eyes steadily fixed on the pony where he was standing outside the area of the castle, with the bridle thrown over the post, I began to fancy myself following the hounds, with Tom Quigly sounding his bugle, the spotted beagles sweeping up the hill towards Coologe, and the gentlemen in the red jackets leisurely leaping the fences through Thomnamulloge, and the people on foot scouring across the fields, or standing on the brow of the hill to get a good view. I shut my eyes the better to enjoy the sport, and thought how pleasant it would be to be mounted on a black hunter, and tearing across the fields down from Coologe to the wood of Achsalagh. Getting up over the hill at the upper end of the wood, I had just under me in the hollow the comfortable farmhouses and orchards of Moneytucker, thechurch and churchyard, with the old walls overrun with ivy standing among the tombs; the minister's glebe-house, with its grove and lawn, looking so snug; and below that again, the mill and the ford, with the great big trees around them. Nothing could stop my horse. I felt as if I was on the point of tumbling every moment as he dashed down the hill, and through the copse near the bridge, and past the mill, and on through the rushy fields to Davidstown Chapel. Here

the hounds were all left behind, and the fox was getting through a swamp to a tuft of shrubs on a little island, and nothing less would please my hunter than to plunge after reynard through the slime and sedges floating on the pool. Oh, by the pipe! down he began to sink, and the fox, coming to the edge of the island, with Sleeveen's caubeen stuck on his head, and his toes out through the upper leathers of his brogues, and a well-seasoned dudeen in his mouth, began to grin at me. Down I was sinking, and my legs feeling like icicles, when I opened my eyes with a shiver of affright, and there before me was the side of the castle so white in the sun, the belt of firs, the green lawn in front, and all so calm, and as if they were looking at their own images down in the depths of the clear lake. My first glance after the frightful feel of a moment was at the pony's station, but neither pony nor rider could I see.

"Now I was in a pretty dilemma. The 'master' might have proceeded to the stables in the direction of the old castle, and then extended his ride without delay; and in that case he might be on us in a few minutes, and my proper course would be to waken up my rascals at once. On the other hand, he might make a considerable halt at the garden or stables; perhaps he was only entering them that moment; but I could make no guess as to the length of my slumber, and if I roused my charge too soon I would be rewarded by a cobbing of the milder kind.

"This view of the case kept me undecided, and my mind was painfully employed, and began to get confused, balancing the pros and cons, and striving to inspect the subject from every convenient point, when what should I see but the pony and his rider coming steadily from the Colaght side along the walk, and seeming to enlarge in size as they approached. I strove to shout to the sleepers, but though my tongue and lips moved, I could not produce a sound. My terror was redoubled as the horseman now assumed the foxy visage of Sleeveen, with red bristles sticking out from his sharp muzzle, the *sligeens* altered into gigantic turkey-cock's claws, and the pony changed into something between a crocodile and an elephant.

"I gave myself up when I found the open jaws of the

enormous fox just over my head, and slowly closing the spiked teeth to make mince-meat of me. It seemed as if the grove, the bridge, the castle, the old trees, and the lake were all possessed of life, and waiting in awful silence for some dreadful explosion. My heart ceased to beat, and my blood to flow, and it became impossible for body and soul to keep together a moment longer. All at once relief came; my blood began to flow again, and my opened eyes rested on the upturned calm face of the master, who was inspecting my unsafe position from the back of the wise-looking pony right under my perch. I was preparing in a great hurry to descend, but he motioned me to remain as I was, and after enjoying my fright and confusion for a few seconds, he proposed this question to me as coolly as if I was a pupil undergoing an examination at a table covered with a green cloth. 'My lad,' said he, 'do you know the doom of a sentinel found sleeping on his post?' 'No, sir,' said I, trembling all over. 'Then, I suppose, I must tell you :—a volley of musketry at twelve paces, you dog.' 'Is this your plan for obtaining a character for trustworthiness and sincerity—lending yourself to the designs of these lazy rogues?' 'Sir,' said I blubbering, 'I did not give way to them till they threatened me with a cobbing.' He made me explain what a cobbing was, and though he tried hard to look severe, I saw by the struggle going on at the corners of his mouth and eyes, that he had some trouble to keep down a laugh. 'Well, well,' said he, 'as I see you were in some degree forced to this, I'll say no more on the present occasion; but now lay this simple principle to your conscience; that idling or allowing others under your charge to idle when you are expected to be on duty, is as much a wrong as if you stole the value of your time from your employer's pocket. Be assured that whatever you may fear from such worthies as these, is little in comparison to the loss of your employer's confidence, and the upbraidings of your own conscience. I take for granted that you have a conscience. Now I will ride off without disturbing the repose of your tyrants, and when I am out of sight, wake them up without making mention of what has happened. This is the only plan that

will save your limbs from the dreaded cobbing: but remember that for the future I expect very different conduct from you.' I obeyed his directions, and the next time that Sleeveen and Co. laid siege to me, I told them in plain terms, that I would neither neglect my duty, nor allow those under my charge to do so; and that if they attempted to cob me, I would first give one of them a black eye or a bloody nose, so that they should not have all the sport to themselves; and then that I'd lodge a complaint of their conduct,—if they called me an informer twenty times for it. So I got myself out of their clutches by showing a little firmness; and I hope that with God's help, the little adventure will be of service to me during life.

Mr. Roche.—Ah, what a riddle human nature, at least Irish human nature is! I'll be bound that with all this deficiency in doing their duty, any of these men would go through fire and water, and risk their lives either to save any of the Castle family from harm, or give them any direct pleasure.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FATE OF A PRIEST-CATCHER.

Mrs. O'Brien.—I think, Charley, the swamp where your fox took refuge, was the same where the priest-catcher met his fate in the times of the penal-laws.

Charley.—I have heard one or two different accounts of that, but they are gone out of my head. Maybe, ma'am, you'd let us know how you heard it.

Mrs. O'Brien.—With pleasure. A poor priest was making his way from danger as well as he could in them good old times, and he was tired, and hungry, and heart-sore. As he was getting on through Moneytucker, he went into a little cabin by the side of the road, and asked the woman for something to eat, and leave to lie down in the bed and get some rest. The poor creature gave him the best she had, which was only a square of barley-bread and some milk, and down he lay, and was asleep in a few minutes. Her husband came in by-and-by, and didn't he wonder to see the stranger in the bed! Well, she up and

told him all about it, and sure the devil put it into the fellow's head the same moment to go and inform. Away he pegged hotfoot to a magistrate that lived at Davidstown, and his poor wife guessed well enough what was in his mind though he didn't open his lips to her about it. The poor creature was at her wits' end what to do, and at last God put the thought in her head to run over to Mr. Whitney's and tell him, for she knew his kind heart, and that great a Protestant as he was, he would not hurt the hair of the head of priest or bishop. She told him her story, and he bid her to waken the priest, and send him over at once, and he would wait for him at the hall-door, and strive to get him in without any one seeing him. He also gave her a big coat for him to put over his other clothes for a disguise. Well, all turned out right, and no one in the house knew of the priest being in it except the master and mistress, and one servant that they knew they could trust. Mr. Whitney intended as soon as night came to go along with him to a safer place. Well, the priest-catcher set out the same way that your hunter carried you in the dream, to lay his information before the magistrate. On his return, just as he was passing near the bog-hole you mention, he saw a bull running full plump at him across the field. The attack was so sudden that the poor wretch had no means of escape one side or the other. So turning round he made for the swamp, and before you could count three, he was up to his chin in the sludge. Down he went; there was nothing to hold himself by, so throwing up his arms and slapping the water for a moment, and let us hope, imploring the divine mercy for pardon, he was sucked down, and no trace of him was ever seen again. Mr. Whitney kept the poor priest in his house some days, and then helped him on his way, and didn't let him go empty-handed either.

H. W.—I am rather sorry, Mrs. O'Brien, to have so dismal a story connected with that same pathway across the rushy meadows. On the occasion of my first communion, some of my school-fellows and myself went that way on a fine summer morning to Davidstown chapel. The sight of the beautiful oil-paintings, one representing the

Nativity, the other, our Saviour's healing the blind man; the superior style of the altar to any other I had previously seen; Rev. Mr. Prendergast's exhortations to piety and perseverance; the air of devotion that sat on my companions; a lively faith in the presence of our Lord in the sacrament, and, perhaps, some spiritual sweetness vouchsafed for the time, converted the pictures, the altar, and the sanctuary, into a paradise; and I felt as if I would be glad to leave the world at that moment. Alas! very soon did this spiritual pleasure leave me, and the nothings of school existence get the upper hand again. I suppose, ma'am, the neighbours didn't forget Mr. Whitney's goodness?

Mrs. O'Brien.—They did not: nor to any one of his name; and it was through that and his own kindly disposition that Mr. Tom Whitney, of Rathnure, had his life saved in the rebellion. The old chapel where it happened stood above the bridge, between the river and Gurrawn road. I used to hear the people tell that they often saw the old *carruachs* of the time playing cards in a dry dyke outside the chapel yard, till they'd hear some one crying out, 'Father Rogers is coming.' A nice state their souls must be in to hear Mass with devotion.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BABES OF THE WOOD.

"Mr. Whitney being always such a favourite with the people, did not leave his house in the rebellion. He only dreaded one or two idle, good-for-nothing vagabonds that kept out in the woods, as he had a dispute with them, about something or another; but he knew he could get enough of the neighbours about him at a call if he was attacked: so he took his ease. He felt, however, that the only time he was in danger at all was during the hour of Mass on Sundays, as all the country being in the chapel, he would have no defence. So when the day came round he made off to the chapel and staid there till they all came out. He never pretended that he wanted to turn, and no one expected him to do it. Well, one holiday in that hot time, I believe it was Lady-day in harvest, Mr. Whitney

was going out to see how his work was a-doing when he saw, on the other side of the Rathnure stream, women and men trudging off in their holiday clothes in the direction of the old chapel. 'Is it going to Mass they are?' said he; 'what day is this?' When he was told, he sent word to his labourers wherever they were, to be off to Mass at once, and gave a good scolding to his servants for not letting him know earlier that it was a holiday. As soon as he saw them all on their way, he pegged along after them, and they were all soon inside the little chapel, himself sitting on a form that was laid for his use in a quiet corner. He had not left the house fifteen minutes, when Mrs. Whitney, looking up the lawn towards Blackstairs, saw a body of about sixty men with pikes and guns, coming down hotfoot, and in less than no time the large kitchen was soon filled with them, and a villanous looking fellow with a feather in his hat, and pistols in his belt, and a cavalry man's sword by his side, was asking her where was that Orange thief, Tom Whitney. She answered that her husband was no Orangeman, but one that was well liked by the Catholics of the country, and that he was not at home. 'Well, ma'am,' says he, 'you'll let us judge of that matter for ourselves.' And so they scattered through the house, and barns, and stables, and thrust their pikes through feather-beds, and hay, and straw, till they were tired out, but not a bit of Tom Whitney did they find. Well, poor Mrs. Whitney laid out meat, and bread, and beer on the large kitchen-table, and they stopped in their searches every now and then to take a pull at the big japanned tin can. At last, some one drew the captain side, and whispered him, and off they all went, leaving the poor lady in a cold tremble, but glad to be quit of their presence. One good thing has to be said of the rebels, any way; I never heard that the worst of them ever said an immodest word to a woman during the whole of the rebellion. So Mr. Whitney never had any fear in leaving his mistress in charge of the house by herself. Off they trudged down the stony lane, through the copse, and across the little brook that divides the lands of the Whitneys and Hornecks. And that is the nicest little spot I ever saw,

where you walk on the *ditch* (fence), sheltered by the trees, and the stream rushing out under you and spreading into the shallow ford across the road.

"After. passing the little stream, they were soon at the chapel, and the captain taking his station in front, set his men all around the building, so that no one could escape through the doors or windows, and there they waited till the people got up off their knees at the last Gospel.

"Those that were just inside the doors were not over-attentive at their devotions, you may suppose, from the moment they caught sight of the wood-boys; but the word was passed through the chapel, and Mr. Whitney was as well concealed as he could be among the women. As soon as the first of the congregation began to leave, the captain shouted to them to stop, and bring or send out Tom Whitney, the black Orangeman, that was inside. They said that he was not there at all; but he gave them to understand that he knew better, and would not let one of them budge till they'd land him out. Father Rogers had just taken off his vestments when the confusion began at the door, and so coming down through the middle of the people, he stepped out, and there just before him were my bould captain and his men.

"He stood, and cast a severe look on the party, who all took off their hats, even to the captain: he was striving for courage to keep it on, and brazen it out, but he felt that if he showed any unnecessary disrespect to the priest, he would not be upheld by his clan. Father Rogers asked him in a stern voice what was his business, and why he dared to stop the people? 'We want Tom Whitney, your Reverence,' says he, 'he's in the chapel; there's no use denying it; we don't want to show you nor the chapel any disrespect, but Tom Whitney we must have.' 'What harm has he done?'—said the priest. 'He has always been a good landlord and neighbour, and never showed any prejudice nor dislike to a Catholic in his life, and for what reason, then, I ask, are you bent on doing him mischief?' 'Oh, maybe we won't hurt a hair of his head; but it is useless to stand arguing; we want to ask a few questions of the gentleman, and out he must march. Will your

Reverence please to send him out quietly, and we will give no farther trouble.'

"'No, you ruffian,' said Father Rogers, 'I will neither give him up, nor allow any of my flock to do so, and I command you and your party to retire this moment from troubling the consecrated ground you stand on.' The captain's face now grew quite black with rage, and calling to six of his followers by name, he ordered them to enter the building, and to bring out Whitney, willing or not. They prepared, in a very awkward and shambling manner to comply with these directions, but Father Rogers made a motion with his arm to them, and re-entered the building. They waited for about half a minute, not knowing but he might have gone in to parley with Mr. Whitney, but they were soon dismayed to see him appearing again in the doorway with his chasuble on his shoulders, and a crucifix in his right hand.

"'Misguided men,' said he, raising his voice, 'you have been brought here from some private spite to the good man whose life you are seeking, but whatever excuse some of you may have, from the cruelties of the North Cork, and the bitterness of two or three magistrates, there is not the shadow of an excuse to shed blood now; and what you design would be nothing less than foul and deliberate murder on an innocent and good man, and a sacrilege in the house of God. This would bring down the avenging wrath of the Lord on your souls if you committed it, and on ours if we quietly allowed it; and now I invoke the curse of HIM who died on the cross,' said he, raising his arm that grasped the crucifix high over the heads of the crowd, 'upon each and every one of you that dare to violate the sacred house of prayer and sacrifice.'

"Such was the terror that his appearance and words produced, that when the cowed captain looked around on his party, he saw every one of them on his knees, his gun or pike lying on the ground, and his head between his clasped hands. Thus they stood for a little, the priest in the same attitude, and motionless as a statue; but one by one the outside men began to steal off, and in a few seconds the chief would have found himself deserted, but that he

also took the road in his hand with something between a curse and a prayer on his lips. Poor Mrs. Whitney, after an hour of misery, had the happiness of receiving her husband safe and sound, and you need not wonder that from that day to this there is nothing but good will and friendship between the big house of Rathnure and the farm-houses and cabins from Killanne to Castleboro."

CHAPTER IX.

OUR RIVAL.

JUST as the narrative ended the door opened, and as the custom of that neighbourhood did not sanction announcements by liveried servants, Mr. O'Brien senior, and Mr. Nicholas MacCracken, a neighbouring young farmer, entered, and paid and received greeting. Mr. Nicholas had aspirations above his station in life. His face was considered by us all as of a genteel cut, but was thin, and bore evidence of a life not altogether spent between his farm and the adjoining little chapel. His chin was long, and he had a fashion of projecting the lower part of his face sideways when in conversation.

An inexhaustible stock of assurance and self-respect was MacCracken's, and very valuable are these qualities in worldly matters. He had neither the strength, nor activity, nor good looks of Bryan, nor the talents nor information of Edward; and yet these young men would not be noticed in assemblies where his company was voted instructive and entertaining. He was an admirer of Miss O'Brien, and a greater admirer of her reputed fortune, and was high in the old gentleman's graces, owing to the size and quality of his farm, and his supposed influence at the Castle, and at Mr. Fitzhenry's, and Mr. Graham's, for it was not Nick's fault if he was not at 'hail fellow, well met' with the highest he could meet at fair or market. Poor Mr. O'Brien had a care-worn and anxious appearance. There was ever more a habitual contraction of the muscles about the lower part of his forehead, and a droop about the corners of his mouth, for the poor man could seldom afford to smile. He was not a miser in the worst sense of

the word, but he was always tormented with a fear of coming to poverty, and occupied with some plan for acquiring wealth, more ambitious and fanciful than practical. It was never associated with a long, steady, course of drudgery; and hence, in part, his desire of securing his present companion for son-in-law.

Mr. MacCracken saluted the women, young and old, with much condescending cordiality, and was most respectful and attentive to Theresa, and would gladly have taken a seat in her neighbourhood, but Bryan, rendered courageous by the necessity of the case, had secured one side, and the other was occupied by Charles.

Receiving a hot glass of punch from the jug at Mrs. Roche's right hand, he drank the ladies' healths individually, and then, including the gentlemen in a lump, he apologised for being so late. "But it is a considerable drawback, ladies, when a fellow's name is up for knowing a thing or two. I was passing early enough by the old castle, when who should secure me but the young gentleman himself. So it was nothing but 'Hallo, MacCracken (neither of the gentlemen ever says 'Mr. MacCracken,' but they address me as if they were talking to Mr. Blacker or Mr. Power); you are in a great hurry, MacCracken,' said he, 'but you must stop till I po int out what we have been doing here.' So I was fairly in for two hours, inspecting hot houses, flower beds, and fruit trees, and pointing out improvements, at least what I looked on as improvements on the doings of that old dawdler, Larkin. Well, well, this thing of having a name for cleverness is inconvenient at times, for here I have lost the evening's intellectual enjoyment, where youthful beauty and matronly dignity (*a bow a-piece to the women*) combine to gild the flying hours, and convert bread, butter, and tea into nectar and ambrosia, fit for the heathen gods of old. 'Well,' says our young knight of the shire, 'Nick, you have tastes and talents that would befit the heir of five thousand a year' (I had put him up to a wrinkle or two in the improving line in the course of the evening), 'and I'll never forgive you if you do not choose a companion befitting you in every respect; but unless in the rank of the estated families of the county, I do not know

where she is to be found.' 'My dear sir,' said I, 'there is a young woman, I might almost say young lady, who flourishes beneath the thatched roof of one of your tenants, the beauty of whose person can only be matched by the charms of her intellect.' 'In that case,' said he then, 'why should you not call her a lady without hesitation? for what are the qualities that distinguish 'ladies' from the rest of their sex, but a greater amount of knowledge and accomplishments, manners more gentle and refined, and a more graceful deportment?' 'Sir,' said I, delighted with the compliment, 'to her I am devoted heart and soul; and if congenial sympathy inspire her inclinations, then may the heads of the Lamberts, the Hays, the Fitzhenrys, the Alcocks, and the Colcloughs take their repose as far as regards my designs on the fair scions of their families.'"

Here he relinquished his glass, and made a sweeping bow, in which his eyes rested significantly on Theresa.

CHAPTER X.

INCONVENIENCE OF BECOMING A GENTLEMAN.

"WELL, now," said Mrs. Roche, "this is what I call condescension, to prefer a person of your own rank when you might look higher, and perhaps become an estated gentleman by marriage. I vow that if I was in your coat I'd think twice before I'd decide on the farmer's daughter. Only reflect what a fine thing it would be to be sitting on your sofa in the morning with your dressing gown on, and all the big flowers sprawling on it, and yourself taking tea and reading the news; and your beautiful high-bred lady, with her hair in curl-papers, and she reading a novel opposite you—for I suppose she'd be too grand to fill out the tea. Bye-and-bye, your horse would be brought to the door, and you'd ride abroad to look at your workmen, and lay out gravel walks and flower beds; or maybe follow the hounds, with a soldier's coat on your back, and a jockey's little cap on your head; and if you were to be thrown and kilt, what a fine funeral you'd have! A hearse with great black feathers would be sent for to Mr. Rudd's, and your

grand lady would wear the expensivest mourning, and the nicest widow's caps, that would be sent all the way from Dublin. Well, maybe with good luck, you wouldn't be killed at all, and in the evening you might sit at your dinner from five o'clock to ten, and eat and drink till you'd know nobody, and be carried off dead drunk to bed.

Mrs. O'Brien.—Ah! but it would not be nice for Mr. Mac to be tumbling into his beautiful bed, and disturbing his delicate lady with his puffing and snorting; but I am told that some ladies and gentlemen do have separate beds after they are married; so there would be no great harm done—

Mrs. Roche.—Except the trifling sins of drunkenness and idleness, which you are letting him fall into without much reflection; but in my mind Nick would bring a few troubles on himself by his promotion. Perhaps the ladies and gentlemen after dinner, or when they'd be taking tea or coffee, would begin to talk to one another in French, or Greek, or Latin, about philosophy and the Pantheon, and the newly-made gentleman would have to sit the whole evening with his mouth open, and his hands in his breeches pockets.

Charles.—I can relieve Nick's mind from that trouble, any way. I have often been listening to ladies and gentlemen conversing together when they'd be passing near me in the garden; and I assure you, Mrs. Roche, that they could not hold a candle to Mrs. O'Brien's servant girl, Joanna, or Mr. MacCracken himself, as far as Englified words go.

Mr. Roche.—Ah, but all his troubles would not end there. Perhaps after he had turned into a fine gentleman, he might pick a quarrel with some other gentleman at a race or an election, or maybe a quarrel would be forced on him, and a challenge brought to his bedside next morning. Now, if himself and his challengers were only farmers, perhaps there might pass between them a stroke or two with stick or fist; and except the passion, which to be sure is bad enough, a cut on the head, a black eye, or a bruised rib, is about the worst that could happen.

"But let us suppose that Mr. MacCracken is a gentleman

in earnest. If he refuses to fight he is considered a coward, and perhaps gets a horsewhipping; and his former associates won't keep company with him again, and he has no one to talk to but his tenants and his servants; and his own grand wife despises him, and he feels very lonesome and uncomfortable. Well, let us suppose that he accepts the challenge. Then, if he is a Christian at all, what a state will his poor mind be in the evening before! He thinks of the confused condition his affairs will be in after his death, and of the affliction he will bring on his family: then he may naturally say to himself, 'What I am going to do is a mortal sin; if I shoot this man, and he has no time to repent, down goes his soul to be tormented while eternity endures; and I will be miserable to the day of my death from the thought that I am the cause of the damnation of a fellow-creature—a child of Adam and Eve as well as myself. If it be my own turn, what an awful thing to be standing up strong and healthy, and looking at my enemy's pistol, and not knowing but that in a moment the contents of that pistol, the innocent powder and lead, may be speeding my immortal soul down to the society of the damned! And, perhaps, Mr. MacCracken, your seconds may enjoy their dinner and wine the very same evening as if nothing extraordinary had happened. No, no; working in cold and wet, or going tiresome journeys to fairs and markets, or getting a crack of a stick now and then, are endurable evils; but let that privilege of killing or being killed for trifles, check all your longings for the glories of high life.

Embryo Gentleman.—I hardly know you this evening, Mr. Roche, your remarks are so uncharitable. How is it that our own gentlemen have passed their lives to this without any risk from duels? I don't think you will say, anyhow, that cowardice has had anything to do with it, if there happened to be any necessity.

Mr. Roche.—I suppose that their perfect good breeding and unassuming manners have been a great means; but to my own knowledge, it is only for God's goodness that the elder gentleman brought his life out of the Parliament House in College-green, for he was as ready with his arm

as with his tongue, against the promoters of the Union. Ah, if I was at liberty to speak, I could tell of a fine rascally act of one of the great folk, and he an Irish nobleman, too, when he found that neither title nor gold could bribe our brave old member (he was a young member then) to sell his country. I must still insist, Mr. MacCracken, that you would be in great danger. Do you recollect the death of our gallant young candidate, John Colclough, who was shot by Mr. Alcock, and the grief it threw the whole country into, a grief that will be felt as long as the present generation lives?

Nicholas.—I would consider all this a capital joke, only it concerns myself; but I can assure the present company that if I lay aside all high notions it is not the chance of a duel that will frighten me, I have a fairer motive in view; and now, let every man that has an Irish heart under his waistcoat, fill his glass and join me in this toast—THE WOMEN OF IRELAND; in beauty equal to any, and in woman's best boast superior to all!

This toast was well received by the men, and Mrs. O'Brien neatly returned thanks for all Irishwomen present and absent; but Theresa's father seemed very badly pleased with the relative positions of some of the company, and more than once laid a plan to get Theresa out of her perilous situation; but all his attempts were foiled, as there were so many present who were hostile to his wishes. Redmond had some information to give her concerning her limited stock of flowers, and Mrs. Roche so often interrupted his observations by apropos counter remarks that he was defeated at every move. At last, after requesting his daughter to come over and take a seat by him (Nick's position being very convenient), as he had a question or two to ask her, the strong-armed mistress directly interfered.

Mrs. Roche.—I protest, Mr. O'Brien, that it is very selfish in you to disturb our little society. Have not you opportunities enough at home of asking your daughter any question you like; and what need you grudge neighbours' children a little discourse when they meet, which I am sure is very seldom. But I forgot that you are the Sub-

sheriff's right-hand man this year, and are much away collecting the county rates. It's myself that would not like to be in your coat, with your book and ink-horn, going round to the farmers'-houses, and meeting little welcome. If you wont be offended I will tell you what happened once to a hearth-money collector that lived up there in Grange."

[The story now told may be read in *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts.* It gave very little pleasure to Mr. O'Brien.]

CHAPTER XI.

MR. MAC CRACKEN ON BEAUTY AND OTHER SUBJECTS.

EDWARD often indulged Pat and Peggy with the recital of a household story, but this evening turned out very unfavourable to their wishes. They took little interest in what was going on till the hearth-money man was introduced; but the recital of that legend roused their hopes so far that they asked Edward to tell them some new story they never heard before. Mr. O'Brien, senior, catching the words, interposed rather ill-naturedly, as he saw no present prospect of forwarding his favourite design; "I am sorry that Ned has no better occupation than hearing and telling nonsensical fables. I wish I knew what chance he has of getting any notice at Castleboro, or any other castle, that way. Instead of being taken notice of by the landlord, or Mr. Blacker, or Mr. Fitzhenry, or even Mr. Graham, or buying up corn or cattle, and selling them again advantageously, or acting as confidential clerk in some well-stocked general shop in Ross or Enniscorthy (and I am sure there was enough spent on his schooling), he has now laid himself out for teaching little boys and girls their A, B, C, getting little thanks and less pay from his employers. By and by, he will marry some one without a penny; and there they'll both be with a housefull of children very badly brought up, for their mother will be sure to be a bad manager, like every schoolmaster's wife; and he'll have a rod under his arm, a sliggeen on his foot, and a hole in the heel of his stocking, thinking it a Godsend when he gets from any of his stingy employers, either meal or malt, that he has dearly earned through the nose;

and all because he would not be *said* or led by them that had a right to know better. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what do people marry for at all, I wonder?"—and the children gave up all hopes of their story for that evening.

"Mr. M'Cracken," said our hostess, "toss off your glass, and give us *The Shanduine.* Though I don't understand all the words, the air and your comical style of singing it would make me laugh even with a toothache. Silence, all of you, for Mr. MacCracken's song!"

"Well, well; can't refuse the ladies anything, but I often wonder why I am always *put on* to lead the long dance, or amuse the 'quality' with a song when they invite the tenants at an election, or the birth of an heir, or any other joyful occasion. And how little guard they set on their speech at these times! I remember one evening that I sung the same 'Shanduiné' when the quality and the head tenants were by, how one of the ladies present, after she recovered herself from a fit of laughing, said, and pretty loud too, 'Oh, Mr. MacCracken' (any of the gentlemen would have left out the *Mister*, but the native delicacy of the fair sex can't tolerate such familiarity)—'Mr. M'Cracken, I beg that you will never sing that song to me unless in the presence of others; for I declare that if you asked me to take your own name after such an exhibition of vocal ability, I think I could not say 'no.' 'And that puts me in mind how pale and unhealthy the ladies, either of castles or cities look, when placed near our handsome country girls. On one of my visits to Dublin, I did not, on my judgment and veracity, see one face that I could call either healthy or handsome, while I perambulated the whole round of Stephen's-green, Merrion-square, and from the top of Grafton-street to the Rotundo. Very delicate and lady-like they looked, and beautiful they were dressed, and nicely they walked, but as for rosy cheeks and fresh complexions, Miss O'Brien, who looks among the other girls on a Sunday at Cloughbawn more like a delicate lady than a farmer's daughter, would appear like a dairy-maid beside one of them. I do not require closer acquaintance with them, I assure you.

Mrs. Roche.—Mr. Mac, although your discourse is very

edifying, it is keeping us from the song: let us have it if you please;" and Nicholas, after a few hems, indulged them with *The Old Man*, of which an English imitation is here given.

The Shanduine.

"Oh, pretty young girls, my ways never follow;
Don't take an old rogue with jaws toothless and hollow,
Who in bed by your side, than hard iron is colder,
Who is rough as the oak-root, and tougher and older.
Oh ro, my Shanduine, little I care for you;
Oh ro, my Shanduine, black's my despair for you:
You bitter old thief, I'm as mad as a hare for you;
So crusty, so jealous, a miser and scold.

"They urged me to wed him with arguing and railing,
My parents, my friends, and the priest so prevailing;
The neighbours all gathered to flatter and feast 'em,
But seldom came after; the *wrong way* I've blest 'em.
Same Chorus.

"The match-making rogue met me out on the *high* way,
Advised me to marry, and said it was *my* way;
He cared not a thraneen when paid for his labours;
He made me the sneer of the boys and the neighbours.
Same Chorus.

"If I had a stout *coppaleen* under my idol,
A stirrup of straw, and a good hempen bridle,
I'd gallop him into a bog-hole so cozy;
I'd not crooken a finger to rescue my Mosey.
Oh ro, my old man, I'll then end my sorrow;
Oh ro, my old man, sweet joy will I borrow;
Oh ro, my old man, I'll look for that morrow,
For then I'll be single and wed a young man.

"And when he was drowned, from the bog-hole I'd take him;
And with a sad face, faith it's joyful I'd wake him;
With tobacco and whiskey to make the boys funny,
Oh wouldn't I put the wind under his money!
Same Chorus.

"I ne'er can walk out but he's stuck close behind me;
I'm ne'er out of sight but he's jealous to find me;
If I dance he's afraid that some hundreds bespeak me;
He's afraid that the crows or the foxes will take me.
Same Chorus.

"But oh, in the dead of the night did you *watch* there,
His thin ashy hair, and his head on the *natch* there;

The blaze of the rush lighting up every wrinkle
In his old withered cheeks, while his ferret-eyes twinkle,
And he drawing the pipe—well, I'll do my endeavour,
But girls, machree, he'll be living for ever!"
Chorus as in first verse.

Whether the auditors liked the man or not, they doated on the singer, and laughed till they were tired; less at the subject matter of the lay than the comicality of the execution.

But he would possess the comic power in a very high degree who could draw a laugh from poor Mr. O'Brien. He merely endured the hilarity that flashed around him; and when the tide of merriment came to a level, he called to his helpmate to make ready to come home, as it was getting very late. There was a great outcry on this proposal being made. "It was not so often they had their neighbours of an evening; there was many an evening in the grave; maybe it would be some time before so pleasant a company would be got together again," etc., etc. All was in vain against the master's decree, and we rose to depart. This motion renewed the clamour against the temporary tyrant; but he was deaf to remonstrance, and we wended forth.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR HALF-WITTED PEOPLE.

On passing through the kitchen, we found the large fireplace provided with its retinue of labourers and servants, and a few of the half-witted strollers through the country. One of this class called *Bet-na-Dheega*, was relating how she was annoyed last spring, coming down Gurrawn road, from Mr. Horneck's to the bridge, by a whole ditchful of frogs. "I was just coming from Mr. Eastwood's of Kilanne, after warning him to be off, and give me up my own that he's keeping from me so long; and I was on my way to *Ross-street* (Ross-Droit), to give the same sauce to Mr. Hinson, and so as I was trapesing along the side of the road, one big thief of a frog put up his head, and he bawled and he bawled; and then another fellow put up his head, and he bawled and he bawled; and then they

bawled and they bawled, and they had two rowling eyes likes the Colcloughs.'

Neddy *Lannan* (Lennon), another of the fraternity, was reminded by this that he met Murtheen Caum waumussing down the same road this very day, and, "Och! the craythe hasn't an ounce of sense. He is such a fool that I was afraid to go the same side with him; and he, like a big omadhawn, kept as far away from myself as the road let him. Now, if he is a fool itself, can't he have a little wit about him, and not to keep his clothes hanging down, as if they were going to drop in pieces, and his tongue out of one side of his mouth; and if he's asked a question in the catechism he has no answer to give but 'gluttony, envy, and sloth.' If you'd set a keeler of stirabout before him, he'd never know when to stop till he'd swally every smite of it. He is almost as bad as Dick Shones Phoor. Some of yez knows Dick, I suppose; but he keeps mostly towards the Barony Forth. He's such a feedher, too, that he says 'a good *male* for a full grown man would be a stone of pyaties and a dozen of herrings; but whoever went beyand that was no better *nor* a glutton.' Dick came the other evening to a poor *widda* woman's cabin in Ballyhighland, and she straining her little pot of pyaties at the door. She went to let down her little falling table, and spread the cloth, and then she came out for the *skiagh*, but purshuin' to the pyatie was in it. Dick was after aiting every mothers *soul* of 'em, and was sitting very *combustible* on the little flag seat, and knocking the crumbs off his coat. Oh! what a *pullullu* she let out of her!—and she might as well hold her tongue. I seen the same Dick one day drinking up a little pail full of hay water for the calves, that had only as much milk in it as made it look a little white. *Musha!* if a man is a little light in the head itself, and travels about getting a bit here and there from the good Christians, can't he have a little dacency?" "And that's very true," said another worthy who enjoyed the title of "Bill the Bags," on account of his being provided with a profusion of these unpicturesque but useful conveniences.

Bill, in addition to the bags, carried about a hundred weight of *booltheens*, cudgels, lap-stones, and other incum-

brances; in fact he was no way particular as to the material; but the weight and size of the pack was essential to the comfort of the poor fellow's mind.

"You are right, Neddy," said he, "Dick is a disgrace to the townland he was born in. I'm sure he's not of a dacent extraction. Would you, or Pat Neil, or *me* do the like? I'm sure we wouldn't. I'm of a good old stock myself. They were the seed and breed of beggars, and tinkers, and *assols*, and *geochachs*, and *bochachs*. They lived in Tullow-street, in Carlow, and sold raw mate and biled mate, raw pyaties and biled pyaties, *rots* and rabbit skins. Och! what a life poor thravellers have to lead! It was only yesterday morning that I went into old Mrs. Dunne's, of Thomnamullogue, at breakfast time; and so they *sot* me down at a round stool close by the fire, and gave me seven and twenty hafe-biled pyaties to break my fast and kill the heart-burn, and they were so hard that they broke three hundred and sixty-five teeth out of my head!"

"Ah!" replied Neddy, "you hadn't my luck. It was only last *Monday—Easter morning* that I stepped into Billy Roche's, of Ballinavary, and there they struck me out with three inch o'black-pudden-o'-pig, and from that I struck off to *Thummaas Dhieux's*, of the Leap, and there I got pork, and mate, and puddens-o'-pig."

We had formed a circle round the inmates of the kitchen fire, attracted by the conversation going on, there being something in the demeanour and expressions of these poor children of Providence, interesting to every one that has a sympathy for his kind. Their lot in this part was not so bad after all. They were sure to get enough to eat in their regular rounds, and had always their night quarters secured at certain fixed houses, where they were sure of supper, a good straw bed, and their breakfast in the morning; but the little urchins along the road would occasionally worry them, as I have seen "Stony-Pockets" and other Dublin simpletons annoyed by the street jackeens. Indeed, among many social phenomena whose causes are still very mysterious, must be reckoned the propensity of little boys to torment half-witted people, and defenceless animals, and generally all pitiable objects. Our traditions

say that St. Patrick got good of all he came across except the *gorsoons*, and that in consequence the reverse of his blessing has remained upon them.

Among the occupiers of the hearth I recognised Pat Neil, whose vagaries I had enjoyed sundry evenings a few years previous, at Father Murphy's, of Coolbawn. Many an evening did our dear old priest amuse himself and his society by drawing on Pat's stores of entertainment, holding discussions with him on ridiculous subjects, encouraging him to relate marvellous adventures that had befallen himself, and getting him to exhibit his vocal powers. Pat was very spirited in his way; he carried no bag, never asked for alms, and took whatever money was given him to his old father and mother, who lived in Askinvillar, under Blackstairs. He had his regular stages for food and shelter at Father Murphy's and among the farmers of the district. His left foot, which few ever saw naked, was always enveloped in a mass of cloths, and protected by a stout circular piece of leather, and he had not the sight of the left eye. He was a fearless rider, and could manage the priest's roguish mare, a feat to which no other about the house was competent but the master. I have often seen him lie down at her feet, holding by the halter, as she would be indulging in choice spots of grass or clover, and yet he never received the slightest damage from her teeth or hoofs.

Pat feeling himself kept in the back ground by Bill's announcement of his genealogy, requested the attention of the company to some circumstances connected with the childhood of his own father. "The people were all gathered, you see, one Sunday behind the ale-house in Courtnacuddy, this was before the present learned owner came there, and they were all looking at a cock-fight; and when the cursing, and swearing, and scolding were at the worst, what did they see but the devil flying over their heads with a great *crith* in his back; they saw his fiery eyes, and his horns and hoofs quite plain, and his fore-claws stretched down to pick up some of the worst disciples he could find among them. They all gave a great screech and took to their scrapers, and the *old boy* was so confused striving to catch

them all at the same time, and so bothered for letting any of them escape, that he dropped my father, *who* he was after picking up some where or other. He let a great curse out of him, and darted down after the boy, but the little fellow first touched the blessed earth within the chapel-yard wall, before he could grab him; for the devil was so confused that he did not observe where he was over at the time. Well, the old thief made a plunge at him, and in his hurry the end of one of his nails struck again a little flag on the consecrated ground, and he gave such a spring and roar that every house in the town shook, and the glass was smashed in the windows; and in his fright his hind claws caught the thatch of the dram-shop, with the half-door that looked towards the chapel-yard, and whipped away the whole roof; and it flew in a blaze through the air till it fell into the *old town*, and all along the little stream that runs from *Thubber Gal* to the mill of Dranagh. Six fellows that were toping in the tap-room at the time, pegged off without finishing their drink, and the *Gow Chrestha* that lived at the back of the chapel, said his prayers that evening."

After Pat had recounted these circumstances in phraseology such as the above, but more involved, and with several repetitions, he glanced round inquiringly, and judged from our admiring looks that he had obtained a decided advantage over Bill's pretensions. Being now much elated, he volunteered to sing one of his favourite melodies, which along with being of a tragic character, contained expressions not to be tolerated, where "breast" is a proscribed word, and ill-bred pianos are obliged to invest their lower extremities in frilled trowsers.

However, to make some atonement for speech rather too coarse, these old lays had one good quality in common with the moral tragedy of "Punch;" poetical justice was triumphant in the end, and the unprincipled tyrant or seducer was invariably given up to the tormentors in the last verse.

So Pat cleared his throat, and recounted the villanies of a sea-captain, who after creating all sorts of wretchedness, started on a voyage, leaving *one* of the victims no resource

but self-destruction, which accordingly took place in a shady forest.

"THE FAITHLESS SEA CAPTAIN.

"I am a sailor, and home I write,,
And in the sea I took great delight;
The female sex I did ensnare,
Until I deluded two maidens fair.

"I promised to be true to both,
And bound myself by a solemn oath,
To marry them if I had but life,
But only one I could make my wife.

"The other—she being left alone,—
She cried, 'You false and deluding man,
To me you've done a wicked thing,
And public shame it will on me bring.'

"This public shame for to prevent,
Straight to a silent grove she went,
And hung herself out of a tree:
Three men a hunting they did her see.

* * * * *

"Her flesh by birds was basely tore,
Which grieved these young men's heart full sore.

"But when these young men they cut her down,
It's in her bosom a note was found:
This note was written out at large—
'Bury me not, I do you charge.

"'But here on earth let my body lie,
For every maid that does pass by:
It's that by me they may warning take,
To see what follows when 'tis too late.'

"And then her spirit did plague him so,
That away to sea he was forced to go;
But the false young man, as they crossed the deep,
Was seldom able to eat or sleep.

"And when the ship was returning home,
A dark boat met her across the foam:
And the dead maid's spirit, all pale to see,
Said, 'Noble sailors, send HIM to me.'

"Down to the cabin the young man goes,
And to the captain his mind disclosed,—
'O Captain, captain, stand my defence;
A spirit is coming for to take me hence.'

"Up to the deck the captain goes,
To guard the young man from his foes:
'O Captain, captain, you must and can,
With speed direct me to such a man.'

"'Twas in St. Helen's this young man died,
And in St. Helen's his body lies.'
'O Captain, captain, how can you say so?
For he lies in your ship below.

"'Captain, captain, don't stand his defence,
Or a dreadful storm I will bring *hence*,
That will cause you and your men to weep,
And leave you slumbering in the deep.'

"Down the deck the captain goes,
And brought the young man unto his foe.
She fixed her eye so grim on him,
She made him tremble e'ery limb.

"'It is well known that I was a maid
When first by you I was betrayed,
And now my spirit has come for *thou*:
You baulked me once but I have you now.'

"To sob and sigh he did begin,
But she led him down, and she forced him in;
The boat went off in a flash of fire,
Which caused the sailors for to admire.

"Now list ye sailors to my song,
And if you wish to live well and long,
Be true to one whate'er betide,
And don't ill-use poor womankind."

Pat's tragedy concluded amid general silence, and clucking of tongues against sympathising palates; and we that were outward bound, took our departure.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOME EXCURSIONS.

As we sallied out, Bryan, putting a bold face on his prospects, secured Mrs. and Miss O'Brien at his sides, and we rejoiced in his success for a distance of ten perches or so; but then the voice of the master was heard, requesting his daughter's attention for a little. He and Nicholas were at some distance behind, and when the summons reached us, we became anxious for the course she would adopt, for the old gentleman evidently intended to give his favoured

aspirant an opportunity for a little conversation. The mother and lover looked earnestly at her for a moment, during which moment, though it was evident she felt great annoyance, she formed her resolution. Giving her hand to Bryan, she bade him good evening, saying that "as the distance to the bawn gate was but short, it was a matter of no great consequence; that she was not much dismayed by the dread of a conversation of forty perches or so, even with the great Mr. Mac Cracken himself; and that she hoped he would take care of her mother for the remainder of the perilous journey through that rough and bushy lane. So she stepped back, and joined her father and suitor, and, as we had surmised, Mr. O'Brien soon left the couple to entertain each other as it might turn out, himself falling back. I pitied poor Bryan exceedingly for the rest of the walk. He answered at random, even to Mrs. O'Brien; and I could guess from the fierce expression of his ordinarily placid countenance, as he glanced back from time to time, what was going on within. From the peculiar perking of Nick's chin towards his companion's bonnet, and the eagerness of his gestures, it might be supposed that he was doing his best to improve the occasion, but Theresa's demeanour and movements seemed to express indifference and great self-possession, and she bore her part in the conversation with little appearance of interest or emotion.

Arrived at the other gate we were all pressed to enter and rest ourselves, but no one thought fit to comply but Mr. Mac Cracken. Bryan seemed disposed to follow his example, but for a squeeze given to his arm by Redmond. So we left the party at the gate, Bryan seeming to receive some trifling consolation from pressing the hands of mother and daughter on bidding them a final good-night, but not turning from the spot till the loved form was shut out from sight by the closing door.

Himself and Edward volunteered to see us a part of our way home, but he stopped after a few perches' walk, and gravely asked what we thought of delaying till Mac Cracken came out, and then and there, if he did not give up his pretensions, to see it fairly out between them, with us for

witnesses of fair play. Pitying his disturbed state, we did our duty in dissuading him from the design, but seeing that his wrath seemed rather on the increase than otherwise. Edward brought him to reason by giving it as his decided opinion, that such a step would bring Theresa's name into public gossip, and even in other respects be highly displeasing to her.

The two friends accompanied us to Gath-na-Coologe, and as we parted, and looked after them, returning towards the bridge, we were arrested by the calm beauty of the autumn night, the white vapour hanging over the hollows of the Boro, the dark fir grove beyond, the roof of the castle catching the light of the waning moon, the lofty trees towards the old building, and the long ridge of the White Mountain rising faintly obscure from the intervening haze; the crescent and the reflected light on the castle-roof being the only positive bits of brightness in the entire expanse before us. After once more exchanging a cordial good-night, with a promise of meeting at Cloughbawn next Sunday, we briskly started for Courtnacuddy, passing the pool of clear water in the old slate quarry. We were a little depressed by observing towards Enniscorthy some promise of rain, as the harvest through the country was in anything but a safe condition.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WAKE AT PEDHER MŌR'S.

Poor Shān Raguireen died, as Mr. Roche suspected he would, and the gold and the notes were found quilted in his wretched clothing; and search was made for his relatives in and about Rathgeran, on the County Carlow side of the White Mountain, where his mother was known to have dwelt. Meantime, as much was taken from the hoard by Big Peter, in whose premises he died, as was necessary to buy a shroud and coffin, and some pipes, and tobacco, and snuff. Sheets were hung up in a corner of the barn, and the poor corpse being shaved and washed, and provided with a clean shirt, was laid on a table in the same corner, and covered with a sheet. Two or three large, roughly-

coloured wood prints of devout subjects were pinned on the sheets, and candlesticks, trimmed with coloured paper and furnished with candles, were provided. One or two persons relieved each other during day-light, to keep watch and ward; any poor neighbour cursed with a taste for tobacco smoke was only too ready for this duty, but the approach of darkness brought company enough, more indeed than were benefited by the social duty.

The brave old patriarch Pedher took his ease in his own chair, and held forth to two or three of his neighbours, as old as himself, on the old chronicles of Castleboro. Little attention did we pay to his legends, and sorry enough we are at this moment for our inattention. The hero of his narrative was a certain *Square* (Squire) Heaton, who, it appears, was the possessor of the Castleboro demesne in some former age, and a terrible Turk he must have been. He was employed in some fierce contention with his neighbours or tenants, we cannot now remember which, about a certain common, overgrown with furze bushes—in fact, a large *knoc*. This knoc afforded shelter to hundreds of hares and rabbits, and as the Squire would not give way to the demand made on him about the said knoc, the party collected and set fire to it on a fine summer evening. Pedher described, in a most graphic manner, the effect of the fire seen from the country round, and the poor hares and rabbits running for their lives, with their fur all scorched, and their eyes nearly burned out of their heads, and themselves falling into the hands of the crowds that kept watch at the edge of the burning mass.

This reminiscence drew on others connected with matters that had place before the Rebellion; and while so employed Edward, Bryan, and Charley entered the room. They reverently uncovered their heads, and recited the *De Profundis*, verse and response. At the end they put on their hats, and approached the elderly group. A grand-daughter of Pedher's and Mrs. O'Brien's servant girl, Joanna, a rattling young damsel, came in with them, and after the psalm joined the womankind of Big Peter, who occupied seats near the table.

The seniors, not willing to infringe on their allotted

hours of rest, began to withdraw, after having nearly exhaused the interesting topics of the locality; and it was not long till a considerable mass of lively conversation, interesting to the younger portion of the company, began to develop itself among the sundry groups, two or three of the chief families keeping together near the table, as was mentioned. At last a request came from a young woman of this group to Mr. Redmond, that he would indulge them with a song. Being little troubled with bashfulness, he complied at once, merely asking one of the little boys to bring a young cat from the kitchen to walk down his throat and clear away the cobwebs. He warned his audience that his song was useful to any one thinking of paying a visit to the bites of Dublin.

"THE CONNAUGHT MAN AT THE REVIEW.

"With a nate house and garden I live at my aise,
But all worldly pleasures my mind cannot plaise;
To friends and to naybours I bid them adieu,
And I pegged off to Dublin to see the review.
Laddly, ta ral lal, ta ral lal, lee.

"With thrembling *expections* the town I advanced,
Till I met with a soup-maker's cellar by chance,
Where I saw hogs' puddings, cows' heels, and fat tripes;
And that delicate sight . . . . . .
Laddly, &c.

"I stood in amaze, and I viewed them all o'er
The mistress espied me, and came to her door;
'Step in, if you plaise: there is every thing nice;
You shall have a good dinner at a reasonable price.'
Laddly, &c.

"I tumbled down stairs, and I took off my hat;
And immediately down by the fire-side I sat.
In less than five minutes she brought me a plate
O'erflowing with potatoes, white cabbage, and mate.
Laddly, &c.

"Says she, 'Twas in Leitrim I was born and bred,
And can 'commodate you to a very good bed.'
I thanked her, and straightway to bed I did fly,
Where I lay as snug as a pig in a stye.
Laddly, &c.

"In less nor five minutes my sides they grew hard,
For every feather it measured a yard.

A regiment of black-boys my poor corpse o'erspread,
And insisted they'd tumble me out o' the bed.
Laddly, &c.

"I slept there all night until clear day-light,
And immediately called for me bill upon sight,
Says she, 'as we both are come from the one town,
And besides ould acquaintance, I'll charge but a crown.'
Laddly, &c.

"'Oh, that is too much now, and conscience to boot;'
So between she an' I there arose a dispute.
To 'void the dispute, and to soon put an end,
She out for the polis her daughter did send.
Laddly, &c.

"In the wink of a eye I was sorely confounded
To see my poor body so sadly surrounded.
I thought they wor mayors, or peers o' the land,
With their long coats, and drab *cabes*, and guns in their hands.
Laddly, &c.

"'Gentlemen,' says I, 'I'm a poor, honest man:
Before in my life I was never trepanned.'
'Come, me good fellow! Come pay for the whole,
Or else you will be the first man in the *goal*.'
Laddly, &c.

"I paid the demand, and I bid her adieu,
And was off to the Park for to see the review;
Where a soger he gave me a rap of his gun,
And bid me run home, for the *white-eyes* were done.
Laddly, &c.

"'My good fella,' says I, 'had I you where I know,
I'd make you full sore to repent o' that blow.'
At the hearin' o' this, in a passion he flew,
And his long carvin' knife on me poor head he drew.
Laddly, ta ral lal, la ral lal, lee."

There were three or four verses more, but the readers are probably content with the quantity furnished. There was clucking of tongues against palates at the mention of the roguish tricks of the Dublin dealers; but a carrier in company cleared the city-born folk of some of the odium imparted by the song, and pronounced country people who had made good their standing in Dublin for a few years, to be the greatest cheats in the kingdom. Mr. Redmond, having now a right to call, summoned Joanna, the servant maid, before mentioned, to show what she could do. Joanna,

though very ready with her tongue at home, was at heart a modest girl, and fought hard to be let off. But one protested that she was a good singer, in right of a lark's heel she had (this was not the case, Joanna had a neat foot); another, that she was *learned* to sing by note when Tench, the dancing-master made his last round through the country; another, that he heard herself and a young kid sing verse about one day when nobody was within hearing. So poor Joan, to get rid of the torment, asked what sort of song should she sing, and a dozen voices requested a love song about murder. So after looking down, with a blushing face, for a while, she began with an unsteady voice, but she was soon under the influence of the subject-lay, and sung with a sweet voice one of these old English ballads, which we heard for the first time from a young woman of the Barony of Bargy, in the south.

There is one on the same subject in some collection which we cannot at this moment particularize; but the Wexford vocalists never got their copy from a printed book. Joanna's version is evidently a faulty one. It has suffered from transmission through generations of negligent vocalists. It is not an easy matter to tag the subject on to any decided point in the reigns of the kings of England.

"FAIR ELEANOR.

"'Come, comb your head, Fair Eleanor
And comb it on your knee,
And that you may look maiden-like
Till my return to thee.'

"''Tis hard for me to look maiden-like,
When maiden I am none:
Seven fair sons I've borne to thee,
And the eighth lies in my womb.'

"Seven long years were past and gone;
Fair Eleanor thought it long.
She went up into her bower,
With her silver cane in hand.

"She lookèd far, she lookèd near,
She looked upon the strand;
And it's there she spied King William a-coming,
And his new bride by the hand.

"She then called up her seven sons,
By one, by two, by three;
'I wish that you were seven greyhounds,
This night to worry me!'

"'Oh, say not so our mother dear,
But put on your golden pall,
And go and throw open your wide, wide gates,
And welcome the nobles all.'

"So she threw off her gown of green;
She put on her golden pall,
She went and threw open her wide, wide gates,
And welcomed the nobles all.

"'Oh, welcome, lady fair!' she said;
'You're welcome to your own;
And welcome be these nobles all
That come to wait on you home.'

"'Oh, thankee, thankee, Fair Eleanor!
And many thanks to thee;
And if in this bower I do remain,
Great gifts I'll bestow on thee.'

"She served them up, she served them down,
She served them all with wine,
But still she drank of the clear spring water,
To keep her colour fine.

"She served them up, she served them down,
She served them in the hall,
But still she wiped off the salt, salt tears,
As they from her did fall.

"Well bespoke the bride so gay,
As she sat in her chair—
'And tell to me, King William,' she said,
'Who is this maid so fair?

"'Is she of your kith,' she said,
'Or is she of your kin,
Or is she your comely housekeeper
That walks both out and in?'

"'She is not of my kith,' he said,
'Nor is she of my kin;
But she is my comely housekeeper
That walks both out and in.'

"'Who then was your father,' she said,
'Or who then was your mother?
Had you any sister dear,
Or had you any brother?'

"'King Henry was my father,' she said,
'Queen Margaret was my mother,
Matilda was my sister dear,
Lord Thomas was my brother.'

"'King Henry was your father,' she said,
Queen Margaret, your mother,
I am your only sister dear,
And here's Lord Thomas, our brother.

"'Seven lofty ships I have at sea,
All filled with beaten gold;
Six of them I'll leave with thee,
The seventh will bear me home.'"

The usual interruptions arising from the entrances of new visitors had occurred several times during these relaxations, with the results already specified. The last visitor was a young giant named Tom Sweetman, a workman on the farm of young Roche, and an admirer of the songstress of *Fair Eleanor*, who, if she returned his affection, took special care to conceal the fact from the eyes of their acquaintance. Tom was as guileless a young fellow as the county could boast. O'Brien summoned him to sing, and he could produce nothing but the lamentation of a young girl for the absence of her lover.

"THE SAILOR BOY.

"'Oh the sailing trade is a weary life;
It robs fair maids of their hearts' delight,
Which causes me for to sigh and mourn,
For fear my true love will ne'er return.

* * * *

"'The grass grows green upon yonder lea,
The leaves are budding from ev'ry spray,
The nightingale in her cage will sing
To welcome Willy home to crown the spring.

"'I'll build myself a little boat,
And o'er the ocean I mean to float:
From every French ship that *do* pass by,
I'll inquire for Willy, that bold sailing boy.'

"She had not sailed a league past three
Till a fleet of French ships she chanced to meet.
'Come tell me, sailors, and tell me true,
If my love Willy sails on board with you.'

"'Indeed, fair maid, your love is not here,
But he is drownèd by this we fear.
'Twas yon green island as we passed by,
There we lost Willy, that bold sailing boy.'

"She wrung her hands and she tore her hair
Just like a lady that was in despair;
Against the rock her little boat she run—
'How can I live, and my true love gone?'

"Nine months after, this maid was dead,
And this note found on her bed's head;
How she was satisfied to end her life,
Because she was not a bold sailor's wife.

"'Dig my grave both large and deep,
Deck it over with lillies sweet,
And on my head-stone cut a turtle-dove,
To signify that I died for love.'"

It is probable that the sentiments of this ballad will not produce corresponding ones in our readers. It was not so with the younger portion of Tom's audience, for he sung it with much feeling. He was a sincere young fellow, besides being a lover.

It would be trying, except to the nerves of a social antiquary, to be obliged to hear many more of the lays then and there sung. Few were distinguished by genuine poetry or good taste. Of course the company were not without hearing of the "Sailor who courted a farmer's daughter, that lived convanient to the Isle of Man." Then the really jovial song of the "Wedding of Ballyporeen," set the audience a-laughing, though often heard before; and they were soon admiring, with open mouths and eyes, the great learning displayed in the *Bouchal na Gruaga dhowna*, the *Colleen Rua*, *Sheela na Guira*, and the *Cottage Maid*. We will content ourselves with moderate extracts from these once popular pieces—the composition of schoolmasters or poetasters, intent on exhibiting their acquaintance with the Pantheon.

A young lady lamenting the absence of her *Bouchal na gruaga Dhowna* (boy with the brown hair), thus gives vent to her feelings:—

"Now if he can't be found
I'll search the globe all round—
Europe and likewise Asia,

Not only in Rotterdam,
But in the Holy Lands,
And the burning deserts of Arabia.
At night my tale I'll tell
In groves to Philomel,
His name in echo back resounding;
If he away should fly,
I'll lay me down and die
For the Bouchal na gruaga dhowna.

"But now the war is o'er,
And he returning home;
In triumph he has passed grand Cairo.
His fame for to make known,
He was with laurels crowned,
Like Ciligis before O'Mara."

* * * * * *

We have hitherto been unsuccessful in our attempts to identify the two heroes above named, and the occasion of one being honourably presented to the other. In the *Colleen Rua* (red-haired girl), the lady and gentleman affecting to hold a love conference, are merely testing each other's knowledge of the Grecian mythology. He commences the learned scrutiny thus:—

"'Are you Aurora or the goddess Flora,
Euterpe, Thalia, or Vanus bright,
Or Helen fair beyond compare,
Whom Paris stole from the Grecian sight.
You lovely fair one, you've me enslaved,
I'm inextricated by Cupid's clew,
Whose Gordian knots and insinuations
Have deranged my ideas for you, Colleen Rua.'"

But the lady of the golden locks is not for a moment mistaken as to the character of the address. She feels that he wants to crush her under the weight of his learning, suspects there is little real feeling at the bottom of all the eloquence, and by her answer, shows she is heart whole, not so easily taken in, and able to match the brightest gem of erudition in his collection.

"She says, 'be easy and do not tease me
With your false praises most jeeringly;
Your Gordian knots and insinuations
Are incantations for deceiving me.

I'm not Aurora nor the goddess Flora,
But a simple fair maid in all men's view,
That's here condoling my situation;
My appellation is the Colleen Rua.' "

Sheela na Guira was the most eloquent of the ballads of this class. It went on in a rattling succession of anapæsts and spondees; and whatever objection might be made to the taste of the composition, no limp or halt could be detected in the march of the rhythm. The lover assails his mistress in the same fashion as the red girl's suitor, and gets a very suitable and impudence-checking answer:—

" 'Are you 'Rora, or Flora, or famed Queen Demira?'
She answered, 'I'm neither; I'm Sheela na Guira.' "

If the author of the *Cottage Maid* was the worst poet of the four, still he displayed a deeper and wider acquaintance with the dreary Pantheon. The others rarely looked lower than Olympus; he went down to the Elysian Fields, and not only secured the Dii Majores, but even their mortal favourites:—

" Telemáchus tho' so grand
Ere the sceptre reached his hand,
Would be certainly trepanned,
Had he perceived her;
Nor could Mentor him dissuade
From that sweet and simple shade,
Though Calypso by her arts
She had ensnared him.
His sire he'd seek no more,
Nor descend to Memnon's shore,
Nor venture on the Sirens' dire alarms.
But daily place his care
On that emblematic Fair,
Till he'd barter coronation
For her charms.

" But Mercury, I fear,
On some errand will draw near,
As he pilfered Vulcan's tools
From *Polyphamus*,
And bear away his prize
To some other distant skies,
As he stole away the girdle
From *Vanus*.
He stole eternal fire,
And music from the lyre,

And by virtue of his harp
He got his pardon ;
Sure he might steal the Fair
From that solitary sphere :
May an organizing shepherd
Be her guardian ! "

May he, indeed! So say we all of us. But why an *organizing* swain? Ah, here is where the learning and finesse of the writer may be detected. Organs and pandean pipes are built on the same principle ; and is it not more dignified to say, "there goes an organizing shepherd" than "a pandean-pipe-playing shepherd?"

Some of the assembly began at last to show by their manner and gestures, that they had lost as much time as they could afford in the enthralment of sweet sounds, and a request was forwarded to O'Brien, and Roche, and Redmond, that they would get up the wake-house drama of *Old Dowd and his Daughters*, to enable them to hold out against the attacks of bad air and want of sleep.

We are sorry that the young men did not exhibit a better sense of the moral fitness of things. They were not disposed to vice, private or public, but custom so far influenced them, that what was harmless at other times and in other places they looked on as harmless at a wake. So Charles at once assumed the functions of stage manager, and the personation of *Old Dowd* with a daughter to dispose of. He set the blushing and tittering Joanna on a chair beside him, Tom Sweetman, and two or three other young fellows on a form at his other side, cleared an open space in front, procured a good stick for himself and each of his sons, and awaited the approach of the expected suitor. O'Brien and Roche had gone out, and on their re-entrance were to be looked on—the first as the suitor, a caustic poet, who makes himself welcome at rich farmers' houses by satirizing their neighbours, and the second as his steed, whose forelegs were represented by the biped's arms, and a stool firmly grasped in his hands. Roche's election to the office was determined by his size and great strength. Amid the most profound silence commenced the drama of—

OLD DOWD AND HIS DAUGHTERS.

[Present: Old Dowd, *his marriageable daughter*, Sheela, *and his six sons. Enter* poetic suitor, *appropriately mounted.* Father and sons *eye the pair with much contempt.*]

Old Dowd.—Who is this, mounted on his ould garran, coming to disturb us at this hour of the night? What shuler or *sthronshuch* can it be? I don't think we can afford you lodging, honest man; you must go on farther.

Suitor.—I'm not an honest man, no more than yourself, you ould sinner, and I don't want lodging. I'm seeking for a solace of life's woes—in plain words, a connubial participator of my terrestrial destiny. Are you lucky enough to be able to suit me? You'll not get the chance of a high-bred connexion in a hurry. My grandfather owned seven townlands, and let more property slip through his fingers than the whole seed, breed, and generation of the Dowds possessed since Adam was a boy. Come, are you ready for me?

Father of Bride.—Pray, what property have you?

Suitor.—A law shuit that's to be decided on St. Tibb's Eve. If I gain it I'll get fifty acres of land on the side of Blackstairs, at a pound an acre. If I lose, they can only put me in the *Marshals.* Come, let us see the bride. But first, as they used to say at the siege of Troy, expound your descent and genealogy.

Father.—Here I am, Old Dowd, with his six sons—himself makes seven; four more would be eleven—and hurraw, brave boys."

At this point of the conference the patriarch flourished his stick, and aimed a few blows at the steed and rider, more, however, in courtesy than resentment. The suitor warded the strokes with some skill, and gave a tap or two to his father-in-law elect. He at last setting his weapon upright, the strife ceased.

Father.—Come, I see you are not altogether unworthy to enter the family of the Dowds. What's your profession? How do you earn your bread? I won't send out my dear Sheela to live on the neighbours.

Wooer.—I'm a poet, and live by the weaknesses of mankind.

Father.—Och, what a trade! Your coat is white at the seams. Which is that a tommy or a real shirt you have on you? How many meals a day do you get? Every one knows the saying—as poor as a poet.

Offended Bard.—Then I think three-quarters of the people about here must be of the trade. If you were to be twenty father-in-laws to me, learn to be mannerly, Old Dowd. I scorn a tommy, except when my old shirt is worn out, and my new one not come from the seamstress, and if I could find appetite I might eat seven meals a day. I stop at a gentleman-farmer's, and repate a few verses that I made on a neighbour for his stinginess to one of the ould stock of the Muldoons, and a poet besides; and don't meself and me steed live there like fighting cocks, and the man of the house not daring to sneeze for fear of getting into a new lampoon. Is this my bride? Oh, the darlint! I must make a verse in her praise off hand:

> "If I was Homer, that noble pomer,
> I'd sing your praises in verses sweet;
> Or Elexandher, that bould commandher,
> I'd lay my throphies down at your feet."

"Venerable head of the Clan Dowd, my Intended looks a little hot. I hope it wasn't with the pot-rag she wiped her face this morning. Old Dowd, you'll have to shell out something decent for soap. The young lady's name is Sheela, you say. She's not the same Miss Sheela, I hope, that Pat Cox, the shoemaker, was lately courtin'?

Indignant Parent.—You vagabone of a poet, do you think I'd demane the ould kings of Leinster, my forefathers, by taking into my family a greasy shoemaker?

Poet.—I only asked a civil question. Pat met his darling one day, and she binding after the reapers, and axed when she'd let him take her measure for a pair of new shoes. "No time like the present time," says she, and off she kicked her right foot pump. Her nails were a trifle long, and her lovely toes were peeping out through the worsted stockings. If there was anything between the same toes it wouldn't be polite to mention it. So bewildered was the

amorous swain by the privilege conferred, that he felt within the recesses of his intellectual faculties, that a prolongation of communication would be prejudicial to his heart's serenity. The shoes are yet unmade, and Pat's nearest abode is Booladhurracha in the Duffrey.

Enraged Parent.—And do you dare, you foul-mouthed fellow, to cast insinuations on the delicate habits of my dear child? Take this for your reward.

Sympathetic Sons.—And this—and this."

And now commenced a neat cudgel-skirmish between the high contracting parties. The wrathful sire not only struck at the evil-tongued rider, but also whacked at the inoffensive steed. The suitor warded the blows from his trusty charger as well as he could; but still one or two made disagreeable impressions on sensitive portions of his frame, and the sons with their wooden falchions were adding to his discomfort. So the noble animal, feeling his patience rapidly diminishing, executed a demi-volte, and applying the hoof of his off hind leg to the bench on which the old gentleman and his sons were sitting in state, he overturned them with little effort, and their heads and backs made sore acquaintance with the wall and floor.

This disagreeable incident, and the still unconquered difficulties, stopped the further prosecution of the suit; and amid rubbing of sore spots, scratching of heads, and bursts of laughter from all parts of the room, they set about another match; Pedher's grand-daughter being obliged to sit for the next blushing bride. In this second act, Redmond came in as a wooer, bestriding Tom Sweetman. His cue was to have nothing of the poet or the vagrant hanging to his skirts. He was the parsimonious, careful tradesman of country life. O'Brien presented *Old Dowd.*

Wooer No. 2.—God save all here! I want a wife, look here, and no more about it. Have yez got the article?

Future Father-in-law.—To be sure we have! Who are you, if you plaise, and what's the name that's on you?

Thrifty Suitor.—I'm not ashamed of my name nor business any day. I'm a brogue-maker to me thrade, and

me name's Mick Kinsella; and I'm not without a few thirteens in my pocket, not all as one as that frighten-the-crows, Denny Muldoon, that'll be obleeged to bring the shakedown near the fire, and throw his cotha-mor over his bride to keep her from starving with the cold in the honeymoon. I won't have Miss Sheela, you may depend on it.

Sheela's Father.—'Deed I think you're right, Mick-the-Brogue. That dear girl was a leetle untidy; still she wasn't without her good points; but she would persist in wiping the plates with the cat's tail when the dishcloth was not at hand; and I'm afraid that her husband won't be known by the whiteness of his shirt collar at the chapel. Well, well, we won't speak ill of the absent; but here, you son of a turned pump, is the flower of the flock for you; here's one that will put a genteel stamp on your stand of brogues at a fair or market. By the way, the shoe-makers don't associate with you, men of the leather *fong*. They don't look on you as tradesmen. What shabby pride! Saving your favour, Mick, what property have you, and what do you intend to leave to your widow? No one can throw in your teeth that you married out of a frolic of youth. You're turned fifty, I think.

Mick.—No, I am not, Old Dowd. I am only pushing forty-five; and I have neither a red nose nor a shaky hand, Old Dowd; and I hope Mrs. Kinsella won't be at the expense of a widow's cap for thirty years to come, Old Dowd. But not to make an ill answer, I have three hundred red guineas under the thatch. And now tell me what yourself will lay down on the nail the day your daughter changes her name.

Haughty Sire.—Well, well, the impudence of some people bangs! Isn't it enough, and more than enough, to get a young woman of birth, that has book-larning and reads novels? And you big jackass, don't you think but your bread will be baked the day she condescends to take the vulgar name of Kinsella? Why, man, the meaning of the word is "Dirty Head." An old king of Leinster got it for killing a priest.

Matter-of-fact Wooer.—I don't care a pig's bristle for your norations and shanachus. Give an answer, if you please.

Old Gentleman.—Oh, murther, murther, Old Dowd! Did you ever think you'd live to hear your genteel and accomplished daughter, Miss Biddelia Dowd, called by the vile name of Biddy-the-Brogue?

Impracticable Candidate.—None of your impudence, you overbearing, immoral old toper! I want a wife to keep things snug at home, and make me comfortable, and not let me be wronged by my servants and workmen. You say that Biddelia reads novels: and maybe when the ploughmen come in at noon, they'll only find the pyaties put down over a bad fire, and the mistress crying over a greasy-covered book in the corner. To Old Nick I pitch all the novels in the world.

Dowd (father and sons).—This ignorant bosthoon never went as far as the "Principles of Politeness" in the "Universal Spelling-book." Let us administer the youth a little of the oil of hazel, to soople his joints and larn him manners. Whoo!"

Then another passage of arms took place, in which some skilful play was shown with the sticks, and several sound bangs were given and received, to the great delight and edification of the assembly.

Kinsella.—Now that these few compliments are over, what is to be the fortune of Biddy—beg a thousand pardons —Miss Biddelia Dowd, I mean?

Dowd.—Isn't her face fortune enough, you vulgarian? Do you think nothing of the respectability of having her sitting on a pillion behind you going to fair or market to look after your kish, with her green silk gown and quilted purple petticoat, and her bright orange shawl? Ah, you lucky thief! Won't you have the crowd of young fellows round you, bargaining for your ware, and inviting Mrs. Kinsella to a glass of punch? I think, instead of expecting a fortune, you should give a big bag of money for being let into my family.

Hard-headed Lover.—Old Dowd, all your gosther isn't

worth a cast-off brogue. Mention a decent sum, or back I go to my work. I'm young enough to be married these fifteen years to come."

Here the father and sons put their heads together, and finally the hard-pressed senior named twenty pounds; but the worldly-minded suitor exclaimed against the smallness of the sum, and insisted on a hundred. After a series of skilful thrusts and parries, they agreed to split the difference; and the candidate was asked whether he preferred to receive it in gales, or be paid all at once. He inconsiderately named present payment, and had soon reason to repent of his haste to become rich, for the dowry descended on himself and his charger in a shower of blows from the tough hazels and blackthorns of his new relatives. After receiving and inflicting several stripes, he shouted out that he was satisfied to give a long day with the balance. And so, with their shoulders and sides sore with blows and laughter, the play came to an end; and much satisfaction was shown by the audience both with the action and dialogue, for many in the crowd knew the parties who were represented, and scarcely, if at all, caricatured; for Denny Muldoon, and Mick Kinsella, and Peg-the-Brogue, were well-known under other names.

When the enthusiasm had subsided a little—it being now about one o'clock in the morning—O'Brien, Roche, Redmond, Joanna, and Sweetman withdrew, not omitting to recite some prayers before they quitted the room.

When the vacated seats came to be filled, and lately-bashful young fellows began to use the tobacco-pipes, which none but the elder folk had meddled with before, the hitherto tolerably decent spirit of the society began to evaporate, and confusion and ill manners to prevail. However, a young fellow, who felt a desire to hear himself sing in company, got some of his supporters to endeavour to still the tumult, and request him to favour the society with a song. The tumult did not entirely subside till the first notes were heard; and the dismal style in which the verses were chanted, requited the general restraint but indifferently:—

"THE STREAMS OF BUNCLODY.

"Was I at the moss-house where the birds do increase,
At the foot of Mount Leinster, or some silent place,
At the streams of Bunclody, where all pleasures do meet,
And all I require is one kiss from you, sweet.

"The reason my love slights me, I do understand,
Because she has a freehold and I have no land;
A great store of riches, both silver and gold,
And everything fitting a house to uphold.

"If I was a clerk who could write a good hand,
I'd write to my true love that she might understand,
That I'm a young man that's deeply in love,
That lived by Bunclody, and now must remove.

"Adieu my dear father; adieu my dear mother;
Farewell to my sister, and likewise my brother;
I'm going to America, my fortune to try;
When I think on Bunclody, I'm ready to die."

The general feeling at the time was too much of a cynical character to relish such a maudlin lay. Several songs were sung, whose composers' ghosts shall not have the gratification of seeing them here either in substance or name. The one that follows is on the debateable land between the tolerable and unpresentable :—

"DON'T MARRY!

"Before a maid is married,
She's as mild as any nun;
When marriage rites are over,
She then lets loose her tongue.
She soon will prove an orator,
And make the whole house ring;
'And why should I become your wife,
To wash, to card, or spin?'

* * * * *

"There was a victim in a cart,
Just going to be hanged,
When a reprieve came from the king,
The horse and cart did stand.
It was that he should marry a wife,
Or instantly should die;
'For what should I corrupt my life?'
The victim did reply.
'They're crowding here from every port,
'Twere wrong to interrupt the sport,
The bargain's bad of either sort,
The wife's the worst—wheel on the cart.'"

At last even the songs, such as they were, began to lose their charm, and games were introduced. No. 1 was thus carried on. The captain took five assistants, and arranged them in a semicircle, giving to each a name. He then began with a short stick to pound the palm of one to whom the mischance came by lot, keeping a firm hold of his wrist all the time, and naming the troop thus—"*Fibby Fabby, Darby Skibby, Donacha the Saddler, Jack-o'-the-Farden, Scour-dish:* what's that man's name?" He pointed suddenly to one of the troop, and if the patient named him on the moment, he was released, and the fellow named was submitted to the pandy discipline. If there was the slightest delay about the name, the operator went on as before—"Fibby Fabby, Darby Skibby," etc., till the poor victim's fingers were in a sad state.

Play 2 was thus conducted. A candle was placed on the ground, in the middle of a circle of lads, and all directed to keep their eyes fixed on it, and their hands behind their backs. The captain provided himself with a twisted leathern apron, or something equally unpleasant to be struck with, and walked on the outside of the ring, exclaiming from time to time, "Watch the light, watch the light." Having placed the weapon secretly in the hands of one of the company, he at last cried out, "Use the linger, use the linger;" and this worthy ran round the circle, using it to some purpose on the backs of his playmates. He then became the captain, and in due course delivered the instrument to some one else.

But the most objectionable trick of all was "shooting the buck." Some person or persons who had not yet seen the performance were essential to its success, as it required a victim or two. The personator of the buck having gone out, the sportsman who was to shoot him required one to three unsuspicious persons to lie in wait inside the door, to catch the animal when falling from the effect of the shot, promising that they should see fine things. All became silent and watchful, and the retrievers were at their post, when the stag appeared in the door-way, a stool on his head, with the feet upturned to represent horns. The huntsman stooped, and squinting along a stick, cried out,

"too-oo"—back fell the animal, and down came the stool, and all the dirt with which the rogue had charged it outside, on the hats and clothes of the raw sportsmen, and inextinguishable laughter rose from all the throats but theirs.

It is now three or four o'clock, and time for any one who dreads the terrors of an over-burthened conscience, while he lies passive and supine next morning, to quit the scene of riot.

We might here moralize on the inherent evil of the institution, and the number of young men who became hardened in vice by attending wakes, and the number of young women who lost character thereby, and everything with it, here and hereafter. The evil lay in visiting them at all, for more than a few minutes. It would be out of the question for the best-intentioned to remain in the foul room for the whole night, and come out as guileless in the morning as they entered in the evening. Girls with any pretence to good conduct never remained in them beyond the early hours of the night, and were always supposed to be there under the guardianship of brother, cousin, or declared lover. We will say, for the honour of those districts of Ireland that were known to us, that it was rare to hear of a young woman—farmer's or cottager's daughter—of bad character.

CHAPTER XV.

SUNDAY MORNING.

It is scarcely necessary to say that myself and my school comrades often lay down on Saturday nights with tired limbs, and consequently were in no hurry to rise on Sunday mornings. However, the vanithee being on foot at an early hour, and it being the properties of plates, pots, and pans to make noise when brought into contact, our morning slumbers become anything but agreeable, and, making a virtue of necessity, we rise. Breakfast over, we devote ourselves to copying with pen and ink one of the little engravings in our prayer-book; and by-and-by we see some neighbours from the direction of Moneytucker pass-

ing down the road to the chapel, and gossipping. Following in their traces, we arrive at Marianne Brophy's bawn-gate, just as Father James Doyle, who has ridden all the way from Davidstown, has arrived. The good clergyman is advanced in years, and feeble; he wears top-boots and cloth over-alls round his legs, and Neddy, the widow's son, receives him with a pull at his fore-lock, and helps him to alight. We enter the clean-swept kitchen, where a good turf-fire is burning under the open chimney on the hearth-stone. Neither the widow nor any of her neighbours is sensible of the advantage of making her fire on something resembling a moveable gridiron, when a current of air could introduce itself under the bars.

The priest's niece, Mrs. Arthur Dunne, is there; so is Mrs. Dunne's husband, and Morgan Dunne, and Mrs. Morgan, and some of the Devereuxs, or Fitzharrises, or Foleys, or Bretts, or Carrolls; and priest and flock chat on local subjects, after he has fixed himself comfortably in the easy straw chair. Good Father James has a little farm which supports his lightly-worked household and labourers, and affords himself something to be interested in. He is now too infirm for heavy parochial duty, which is efficiently discharged by his young coadjutor, Father Prendergast. I cannot recollect a scene of greater quiet enjoyment than the group of pastor and flock sitting round the fire and talking, the sun-beams pouring in through the spy-hole in the partition, and partially tinting, with a lighter shade, the turf-smoke as it rose through the open chimney.

When the priest is rested, and the weekly topics are exhausted, he disperses his audience, and as many as wish to go to confession, come in one by one, and are reproved or consoled as the need arises, and finally absolved. This duty over, and the hour for Mass at hand, he resumes his hat, and, accompanied by some of the parish dignitaries, male and female aforesaid, walks slowly down to the chapel. Jem Quigly, whom we shall meet again, is holding forth at the gate on some subject connected with his own concerns, such as his work, the care that Molly took of him when he was sick, or the answer he gave to

"the master" yesterday evening. Indeed, Jem looked on himself as the centre of all human interest; and other men and things were of value merely as they administered to his consequence.

At the sight of Father James, all flock into the bare-walled, and uneven-floored chapel. Those whose devotion is of a luke-warm temperament, kneel outside, leaning on the low yard wall or the hopping-block, and enjoy the fresh breeze. If the devil helps them to close their eyes at intervals, let them blame themselves.

After the Communion, Father James turning half round, with one arm resting on the altar, gives some practical instructions; and when the congregation is dismissed, he partakes of a breakfast of fresh white bread and milk, provided by Mrs. Art. Dunne, and then mounting his quiet steed, and bidding good-bye to his large family, he rides on slowly down to Dranagh bridge, across the hill to the village of Moneyhore, and thence through the Leap to his house near Davidstown chapel; one or other of his flock keeping him company most of the way. The rest of the day is spent between reading, repeating his office, taking a quiet walk through his fields, or conversing with any of his neighbours that call on him, either to enquire after his health, or to seek help or advice. Help or sound advice was easily got from the benevolent Father James Doyle. He has long since gone to his home, which we may hope is among THE BLESSED.

Such were our Sunday mornings in ordinary; but on the Sabbath next after our meeting at Bryan's, Redmond joined me after breakfast, and we set out for Cloughbawn, and had the good fortune of meeting our friends at Colaght. The autumn morning is warm though moist, and the conversation turns as much on the doubtful state of the crops as on spiritual matters. It would not be considered decorous on Bryan's part to seek to engross Theresa's company on an occasion like the present; so he behaves like a good boy, and does not make the attempt.

Mr. Watt Greene and his eldest son, and some of our younger friends are at his gate, and exchange kind greetings with us; and I am sure that Martha, and Richard,

and Rebecca would gladly join their school-fellows if they had their wish, but rather through a social than a religious motive. Well, it can't be helped—we will see each other again to-morrow, please God.

We enter the little chapel, snugly sheltered by trees, and its grassy yard provided with the ordinary turfy terraces to rest the waiting congregation. We say our introductory prayers with attention or otherwise, according to circumstances and temperament; and then some repair to the gallery, where a few zealous readers relieve each other at *The Difference between Temporal and Eternal; The Introduction to a Devout Life, by St. Francis de Sales; The Spiritual Combat; The Imitation of Christ, by Thomas à Kempis*, or some other standard devotional works. Ventilation not being a "household word" in our townships, a few withdraw when they feel the air oppressive, and soon find relief on the grassy divans in the yard, and Father Furlong having met with a delay, we have time for some "disjointed chat" of this fashion,—Sleeveen being found among the company.

Sleeveen.—Well, well, it is some comfort to poor slaves in this world, that their masters must make an exchange with them in the next life any way, like the poor beggar and the rich man they were reading about just now. If they didn't, there would be no justice here nor hereafter.

C. Redmond.—Then, I suppose, Sleeveen, that in your mind, all lazy labourers and beggars will be sure of Paradise, and all rich people, good and bad, be lost; is that the case?

Sleeveen.—Isn't it said in the Scripture that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter Heaven, and sure it wasn't said that the beggar was doing any good, nor the rich man much harm; and still you see how they came off.

Edward.—What a capital knack Sleeveen has to settle difficulties. Do you ever take the trouble of looking at a question from more than one point, Sleeveen?

Sleeveen.—Faith, Master Edward, I don't look at a question from any point at all, but answer it, if I can do so, without bringing myself into trouble. An' will you or Mr.

Roche, that is a scholar and a great Christian, tell me why was that rich man damned, for I did not hear of any crime he done? and why was the beggar saved, for he only rested himself and ate what they gave him.

Mr. Roche.—With regard to the beggar, it is probable that his infirmities prevented him from doing anything but pray, and offer his sufferings in patience to his Maker. The rich man seems to have employed himself in nothing but eating and drinking luxuriously, without ever making an effort to please God, for which he must have had plenty of opportunity.

Sleeveen.—Oh, dear, oh dear! I wish there was no hell at all. Don't poor crathers suffer enough in this life with hard work, and cold, and hunger, and sickness, and trouble of mind, and not to have such a place to be looking out for when they die.

Mr. Roche.—No one need look out for it, unless through their own fault. The very course that makes our lives happiest here, and keeps our minds most at ease, is what's taken by devout people. Be persuaded that we get abundant help from heaven to lead such lives in this world as will keep us from a future state of misery.

Sleeveen.—Talk is cheap, Mr. Roche. I could no more stay on my knees as you do, nor fast as I see others do, while I slave as I'm forced to do myself, nor say my prayers for a quarter of an hour without falling asleep, than I could fly.

Mr. Roche.—Once for all, be persuaded that if you do not resist God's grace, and if you wish and pray for help with a sincere spirit, even though you may not be able to pray or meditate so long or so devoutly as others, your efforts will be accepted; and as to fasting, you know well enough that neither young, nor aged people, nor labourers, nor those whose health would be affected, are obliged to observe that discipline.

Here Father Furlong was seen approaching, and we all made our way into the chapel.

For the next hour or so we were employed assisting at Mass, and I recollect casting my eyes more than once to the gallery to see if the family of Ballymackesy were as punc-

tual in making the sign of the cross and bending the knee as the worshippers on the ground floor. I forget the result of my curiosity, but I recollect the conclusion of the exhortation well enough. The clergyman, after alluding to the uncertain character of the present harvest weather, and the difficulty of saving the crops on large farms, mentioned the dangerous state of a field of Mr. Greene's, and pointed it out as an act of good neighbourship for all of the congregation that were fit for harvest labour, to repair to the field after Mass, and secure the crop as the day was favourable. "I need scarcely tell you," said he, "that it would be wrong under ordinary circumstances to do such a thing on a Sunday; but here it is authorised by the necessity of the case. Perhaps if it was deferred till tomorrow our good neighbour would be at a heavy loss, and be prevented in a degree from assisting the poor and those who have nothing to depend on but their labour. You do not require to be told how ready Mr. Greene and his family are with their assistance when they see a need."

There was a pleased under murmur from the congregation as the discourse ended, for they desired nothing better than to oblige their worthy neighbour. The moment the *De Profundis* was finished, men, women, and boys turned out and streamed down the path on the furzy hill-side to the field. Reaping-hooks were furnished from "the big house," or the neighbours' barns, and for the next two hours the ripened field furnished as fine a sight as could be witnessed. Men, young and old, were cutting down the corn, their wives and daughters tying it up in sheaves, the delighted boys setting up these in stooks, and playing hide and seek among them at unguarded moments, young men and women jibing or complimenting each other, the pleased owner and his lady enjoying the friendly efforts of their humble neighbours, the result, indeed, of their own well-known goodness to their dependents, and to the poor in general—and the hot sunshine pervading all, as if there had not been a shower for a quarter of a year. Three or four churns full of mixed milk were in the field, so that no one suffered from thirst.

When nothing was to be seen at last but the shapely

rows of stooks, our gentleman farmer addressed his people in a short speech, calculated to interest his hearers. He returned them and their excellent clergyman his sincere thanks, and he hoped shortly to have the pleasure of meeting as many of them as his barn could hold at the harvest-home dinner. So, with mutual good wishes, he and they separated, and the wholesome homely dinners, now ready through the townland, received due attention from the dispersed workers.

When the work was done, Edward, Bryan, Charles, and I made our way down through the fields to the river, and followed its right bank through the rich meadows up to Och-na-Goppal Bridge. Dear old trout-abounding river; how many of my boyish recollections are enlivened by the memory of your dancing shallows, deep pools, and grassy, sheltery banks!

CHAPTER XVI.

EDWARD'S STORY CONCLUDED.

Up the grassy path that led through the meadows along the pleasant bank of the river, we proceeded towards the bridge of Och-na-Goppal, and at our request Edward proceeded with his story as we sauntered leisurely along. The reader will please to remember that he was to meet with his true love near Enniscorthy, and be her guardian across the mountains to the old town of Graigue.

"The morning gave promise of an early summer's day when I left, with a light heart and eager hopes, to keep my appointment. As the sun was rising beyond Vinegar Hill, how fresh the fields and hedges looked, with the dew-drops hanging from the blades of grass and the leaves of the shrubs; and how cheerful sounded the chirping of the birds! I reached the appointed spot beyond the 'Bloody Bridge,' and kept walking about uneasily enough, and fixing my eyes every now and then on the upper slope of the road on the Enniscorthy side of the stream. 'Perhaps she has changed her mind, or bestowed her affections elsewhere; perhaps she has been forcibly prevented; or she has, maybe, mistaken the day; or worse than all, be lying

on a sick bed.' My heart began to throb violently at the idea, and I continued to walk rapidly backwards and forwards; but I was soon blessed by the vision of her dear self appearing at the turning of the road. The next five minutes was a scene of joyful confusion, questions, incoherent answers, words of endearment, loving looks, and loving pressure of hands. In a happy frame of mind and body, we turned our attention to the journey before us, and for the next hour or two we were leisurely proceeding along the road that leads through the wood of Moynart, in the direction of the pass of Scollagh.

"Our newly-found and unwatched intercourse was at first somewhat strange, but not the less delightful. All her experience since we last parted was interesting to me, and my every-day course of existence seemed equally interesting to her, especially as I could assure her with truth that her image had never been absent from my mind for fifteen minutes during the entire space, and that the precious chestnut lock of hair had been ever worn near my heart, and was kissed many times in the day. We then went over the events of the short space passed under the same roof, and strove to clear up the rise and progress of our affection by mentioning the little incidents that served, one after the other, as the closer bucklings of a band to draw our hearts together. However strong a person's love for himself may be, there is no sensible pleasure arising from it; but ah! how sweet is this self-love for two, the pure strong affection of two young unsullied hearts. As we went along, the mild morning rays were streaming down through the boughs of the large oak and ash trees, and lying on the roofs and lawns of the seats, so delightfully situated among the woods. The black scaurs of turf, the purple heath, the grey rocks, and the green patches were lying in harmonious coloring on the side of Blackstairs, and a bright fleecy cloud or two dappled the bluish green sky overhead; but though these pleasing accompaniments enhanced our enjoyment, we seemed to take little notice of them, each mind being filled with the other's presence, and sensible that an age would not suffice to dull or lessen the present enjoyment.

"At last we approached the fine old manor-house of Duffrey Hall, and thought how delightful it would be to a newly-wedded pair to wander about on its lawns, and repose on its rustic seats, and enjoy a prospect of married happiness unchequered by any fear of disturbance or interruption; but yet we passed along the boundary wall without a sigh, and crossing the young Urrin, we began to ascend the pass.

"Travellers even as privileged as we, are not altogether exempt from the vulgar necessities of eating and drinking; so we entered the little tavern of Kiltealy, and there, on bread and butter, and milk, we made a breakfast never to be forgotten.

"So far I was not unacquainted with our route, but now the road grew strange and rough, and in many places owned neither fence nor ditch. We were on the verge of the wild common which on our left arose gradually to join the eminence of Blackstairs, and on the other led away to Mount Leinster. At last, on approaching the higher ground of the wild road, we perceived that a few paces more would hide the view of our native county from our eyes; so, sitting down on the grassy bank, we cast a long loving look downwards on the fields, the streams, the woods, and the low hills that we were quitting for a while. A sort of melancholy stole over both for a moment, but a fond look cast on each other soon dispelled the sadness, and we arose, and turning our face to the novel features of the County of Carlow, we began to descend the other side of the mountain. We had now leisure and opportunity to observe the difference in the construction of the houses, which began to be noticeable on the borders of the two counties. Instead of the thatch projecting over the mud walls, as in the Wexford valleys, the stones here prevailed to the highest point, and were disposed in some instances like battlemented parapets on a small scale, the thatch resting on a lower portion of the inner part of the wall.

"Now began the dry stone fences of the fields, and the large blocks of rock often rising in the tall grass of the meadows, or the drilled potato-fields; and we were much struck with the strange appearance of the steep Carlow

side of the mountain. Our way gradually descending now lay south-west, with Blackstairs on our left hand; and we remarked the difference of the figure and of the features of itself and the White Mountain from those of the Eastern face with which we were familiar. I had travelled before now to Graigue, by Templeudigan, the *Raimshach*, and St. Mullins; and also through the *Mam a Chuliagh*, down to Borris; but I was altogether a stranger to the present road. However, the hill of Brandon over Graigue was a familiar object, and we sauntered happily onwards, occupied with recollections of blissful moments spent together, of dreary periods of absence, and with delightful plans for our future life, in which, being always together, our days would glide on as happily as the current one.

"We entered the steep town of Graigue late in the afternoon, and after admiring the new Catholic church, uniting with the existing ruins of the old abbey, we proceeded upwards out of the town, and separated within a field or two of the house of Eliza's friend—the few days that were to intervene before we could see each other again, being as formidable as the blank of a quarter's absence erewhile. I returned through the town; and about a mile up the river on the eastern bank, claimed welcome hospitality at a farm-house, where I had been a year or two before on business. We entertain in general a low opinion of the politeness and information of the Carlow farmers and their families; but if I were to judge of the rest of the populace by my Barrow friends, I would pronounce a very different judgment, for the whole family were well informed, and of good manners. I need not say they were hospitable.

"The next morning early, I returned to my duty; and after a fortnight's period of weary separation, I started again on a Saturday, and pretty early in the afternoon I arrived at her temporary home, and feasted on ambrosia and nectar, I mean very good potatoes, butter, and milk, in company with herself and her friend. Delightful was the evening we spent, strolling through the fields, and casting a look at intervals across the flat country on the east side of the Barrow, studded with farm-houses; on the fine river

itself, with its accompanying canal, on the old town and abbey ruins at our feet, and on the broad back of the White Mountain. At night-fall I returned to my friends, and was cordially welcomed.

"Before I retired to bed, I felt impelled to stroll out to indulge those delightful reveries arising from returned affection. I walked backwards and forwards along the lane; and never before did I enjoy a half-hour of such unmixed happiness. The moon was shining over the White Mountain in an unclouded sky; the ridge of the hill itself was only faintly relieved from the sky, but, except the near farm-houses and the elder trees girding the bawns, all between the foreground and the hills was a mass of dim vapour. Now if you connect with this quiet scene the absence of all but a few congenial sleepy sounds, and the happy state of my mind—but I won't inflict too many of my waking dreams on you.

"Next morning I met Eliza and her friend, and we heard Mass in the old Abbey church; and I suppose we were the objects of remark for a short distance around us. Eliza's bonnet and ribbons contrasted pretty strongly with the caps of the Kilkenny and Carlow girls; and among the blue coats of the men, my own brownish drab looked rather singular. We spent three anxiously happy hours together after Mass, and then I returned home. Not to abuse your patience, I will make short work with the rest of my story. I have since paid as many visits as circumstances would permit; and though we have never made much time for speaking of her religious feelings, I have been edified by her devotion to her spiritual duties, I assure you. As I could not think of settling in the neighbourhood of ———, I have procured charge of the school of T., and secured a small dwelling-house for the reception of my bride when the twelvemonth expires.

"I have never had courage to speak to my father on the subject; and I am sorry to say that I cannot get Theresa and my mother to look on the concern with a friendly eye at all. They blamed me very much for entering on what they call a rash engagement; but they agree that whatever be the consequences, I cannot do otherwise than make

Eliza my wife, provided that there is nothing objectionable in her conduct, and that she does not voluntarily release me from my promise. At times I have misgivings of the wisdom of my proceedings, but whatever be the issue I will be true to my dear girl, who, I am sure, is as good as she is amiable; and when we are married, our mutual love will make amends for all the privations and crosses we may meet. Ah! if you were only to hear her little plans about having a stock of poultry, and all her remarks about what may be done by saving and management!"

Bryan.—You have interested us so much, Ned, by your love story that we can do nothing but sympathise with you just now; and if we kept our heads together for a twelvemonth, I believe we could not point out any path but the one you have decided on."

We had strolled along the faintly marked path on the meadows that skirt the river, till we had reached the bridge of Och-na-Goppal, and then we took the left side till we got to the high grassy bank that overhung the deep pool with the large stone in the middle, where we all had often bathed; and there we sat till Edward concluded his story.

Ah! what a luxury it would be to the present chronicler, could he lay aside his daily drudgery; be sure that his people would not need his presence for a week; take one or two of them with him; collect Bryan, Edward, and Charley again with a few of their sons; assemble at the same pool once more; forget Dublin, accounts, income and other taxes, and the price of provisions; take a refreshing bath, and then leisurely dress ourselves on the dry grass in the warm sunshine, with the grassy terrace of the mill-race at our backs; talk of past days, and enjoy the view before us.

The prospect to be sure is limited. Beyond the river is the large sloping field of Glanmuin, with the skirting grove separating it from the road; up along the river extends the meadow on which we lie, and at its upper end the winding water is hidden by the large trees mentioned before; and these are towered over again by the trees near the old castle and the garden. The rays piercing through

the branches produce lovely varieties of light and colour among the foliage, and on the old trunks; and between these and the young fir-grove on the other side of the river, we get glimpses of the hazy purplish side of Blackstairs.

O profound scholar, searching for the quadrature of the circle or the perpetuity of motion! O great minister of state, endeavouring to adjust the uneasy 'balance of power!' O man of business, painfully adding to your gold heap! O artist or author, wearing out your nervous system with incessant exercise, return to the wisdom of childhood! Let a fine day and a country scene give pleasure once more to your jaded faculties; get among children at times, and share in their pranks; go laugh at *Bob Acres* and his valorous cowardice; sit on Killiney rocks for half a day, and gaze on the prospect which has gladdened many a heart. You say that these things are not feasible, that they are difficult, that you could find no pleasure in them—in fact, that you would have nothing to say to them; well then try this other simple experiment.

Go down to Coolbawn next summer, find out (it will be an easy matter) where Father Murphy lived out his useful and edifying life; and on the north side of his garden you will find a deep and pleasant bathing pool in the Boro, There you may disport in the sultry days of summer; and when your clothes are laid aside, introduce your fingers under stones, and into nooks in the bank, and if you do not secure a few trout, you are very unlucky, that's all. If you see any one coming, who might not consider your naked figure an improvement to the landscape, go behind a bush or sallow tree till the intruder pass on.

If the temperature is not so high, stroll downwards below the ford, and you will find another pool with a pleasant southern aspect. A high grassy bank overhangs it, and a steep furze-clad hill shelters this bank again. Half way up in the bank's face is scooped out a nice grassy cove, where you may deposit your clothes, and from which, if you think the bank itself too high, you may descend headforemost into the pool. On the whole, this open sunny spot is to be preferred, for if you are to be invaded,

the intruding parties being able to understand the position of affairs at a distance, will not be subject to a sudden surprise, but will be nicely left to their own discretion and sense of propriety.

Broil any trout or eel you can secure, with plenty of butter; drink goats' milk boiled; eat an oat-cake once by way of variety; and spend a day or too below the castle, on the grassy river bank under the shade of the tall trees. Some fine day take the son of the farmer at whose house you lodge, and go up by Tomenine and Ballygibbon to the ridge of Cooliagh; trace it along to the defile (*Mam a Chuliagh*) above Ballybawn; climb the ascent to *Cahir Ruadh's Den;* then the higher one of the Blackstairs; lie down on the long dry grass, and let the breeze blow over your face. Then, standing on a grey rock, enjoy the wide view over the counties of Kilkenny, Carlow, and Wexford. If you have time, sit in the shelter of this rock after your lunch of flat bread and milk (your guide has brought these necessaries in a little basket); and pull out *Crohoore of the Billhook, The Collegians,* or the *Poor Scholar,* and refresh mind and body at once.

Oh, how I envy you, as your eye wanders down the woody banks of the Urrin, by the fine seat of Woodbrook, and over the many-tinted leafy surface of Kilaughrim wood, chequered by the broad bands of shadows thrown on it by sailing clouds!

Evening is coming on. Take up your lodgings for the night in Askinvillar, or Woodbrook, or Rathduff, or Killane, on the Ross road. Come down next morning through the old Palatine village of Killeen, along the little brook that joins the Boro above Mr. Graham's mill. Go to the chapel of Rathnure, or the church of Killane, next Sunday; return thanks for the restoring of a sound mind in a sound body; return to town in two or three weeks; and buy a dozen copies of this book in gratitude for the advice therein given.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HURLING MATCH.

THE ordinary dinner hour being arrived, we separated till later in the day, when we appointed to meet at Gath-na-Coologe, and exhale our superabundant animal spirits in a hurling match.

I often wonder how the comrades of my youth and myself survived the years of boyhood. Mr. Combe would recommend a short rest after meals, and a gradual cooling out of perspirations; but, ignorant or regardless of these wise and healthful precepts, we swallowed our Sunday dinner in haste, and flew rather than ran (hurlys in hand) to the field, where, in a state of intense perspiration, and after a terrible exercise of two or three hours, we often threw ourselves supine on the grass, and refreshed ourselves with a vengeance. How we live to sing these practices of our youth is a profound mystery to ourselves at this present writing; and we are obliged to content ourselves for all explanation, with an allusion to "the wind and the shorn lamb."

Entering the scene of the laborious sport, we found a debate going on as to whether Rathphelim and its neighbourhood should contend with Courtnacuddy and *its* neighbourhood; but by the advice of the elder folk, whose hurling days were at an end, and who feared a clannish contest, this motion was lost, and Bryan Roche and John Foley were appointed to form the adverse sides.

John pitched up his weapon in the air, and Bryan adroitly caught it as it came down, and held it out at arm's length, grasped at the precise spot which met his palm in its descent. John then took hold of it, his hand resting immediately on Bryan's, and he, letting go his hold, fixed his grasp immediately above John's. Finally the thumb and first finger of the latter coming within one inch of the top, Bryan seized the hurly by the small remaining portion, and swinging it three times round his head, was adjudged the first choice. The ability of every young man on the spot being patent, Bryan called to his side his own workman, Tom Sweetman, whose chance thus made him lieutenant; John selected the next most doughty champion,

and so the scrutiny went on till about five and twenty were chosen on each side. Then the two bodies being arranged in line, and fronting each other about ten ridges apart, an indifferent spectator, taking the heavy leather-covered ball of about three pounds weight, flung it on high between the lines, and at once fifty hurlies were brandished, and a rush like a bayonet-charge took place towards the supposed spot of its meeting the earth. Several blows were made as it descended with increasing speed; but Bryan's weapon, wielded by his muscular arms, received it on the broad curved end; and the ball flew back into the clouds, and made its next descent at the distance of half the field away.

Ah! what a charm, stronger than the sweetest Irish melody can throw over me now, had the heavy stunning sound of the hurly as it met the ball! On rushed the parties like the wind, one to speed it to the goal near the fence of the field on that side, the other to arrest its progress and send it back. A fleet runner of the adverse party getting an advantage of three seconds, inserts the shovel end of his implement under the weighty mass, tosses it upright in the air, and meeting it with a vigorous sweep, he sends it flying back over the heads of the mingled forces. Then sets the confused tide backward as fleet as it came, with the exception of a few who may be considered as the "corps de reserve," and whose business it is to guard the neighbourhood of the fatal wicket, through which if the missive once rushes the day is lost.

Seldom now can be got an opportunity for a free stroke. The whole field seems inextricably interwoven, and short strokes and pushes are all that can be made; and they charge with their shoulders, each against the nearest opponent; and if it were a match where faction could use its will, the small ends of the hurlies would strike the foeman's ribs. But here nothing of the kind takes place; jostling, as it is called, is used, and falls are given; and occasionally the flat of the crooked blade strikes the leg or thigh of the incautious player. No hand is yet allowed to seize the ball; and the perspiring, laughing, shouting, and labouring masses sway back and forwards, as waves rush

and retire on a stony beach. But lo! an artist has by sleight and skill freed the imprisoned globe, and up once more it flies in the free air, and seems to rejoice in its welcome liberation.

Then arise joyful shouts, and for a time it is seen describing aerial curves, or dashing in rapid bounds across the well trampled ridges. Now and then it comes into unwelcome contact with heads reasonably hard, with shoulders, sides, and legs; and if any inactive town dweller asks me why some one is not killed or disabled for life, Charley must furnish an answer satisfactory or otherwise. On the question being proposed to him, he observed that citizens, having doctors and hospitals to resort to, felt themselves privileged to be disabled and very badly off; but country boys, not having these resources, could not afford to lie under hurts.

The tug of strife had held on for about half an hour, when our captain, who was hovering towards the rear skirts of the enemy, seeing the ball flying in the right direction, quickened its flagging motion by a skilful blow, and pursued it at full speed. It was sent back by one of the counter-scarp men, but Bryan caught it on his well-seasoned blade, and driving it before him again, pursued it like the wind. In vain it was stopped, and vainly did the foes rush in his way, with legs in firm position, and shoulders thrown forward. Down they went, men and boys, and forward rushed the heavy mass, till the last triumphant stroke sent it like a cannon-ball through the wicket, and against the soft earth of the fence, and a loud shout and waving of hats announced us victors in the first game.

After a short interval the pastime was renewed; but this time success had rendered us somewhat negligent, and the opposite party being led on by their lieutenant, Mac Cracken, who was determined not to suffer a shameful defeat before the eyes of Theresa, contested the next game so vigorously that they won it, to their own great satisfaction.

The theatre of the sport was a large field at Gath-na-Coologe, as already mentioned. A bevy of women and girls

occupied the portion next the road, as the direction of the play was parallel to that side, and they would thus be in a great degree out of harm's way. Among them were Mrs. O'Brien, Mrs. Roche, Theresa, and the sisters of several of the players. It was not usual to find these women present on such occasions; but we supposed that, fearing some exhibition of bad blood might occur, they attended to prevent mischief.

The married women and the more reserved of the others sat down on the sloping grassy fence of the road; while the younger and more volatile, with as many of the young boys as could obtain the privilege, catching hands and forming a ring, watched the wiles and evolutions of two of the body (one the pursued and the other the pursuer), as they chased each other in and out through the open links of the chain. Another group forming a long line, the two at one end raising their joined hands, allowed the long curving thread to run at full speed through the gigantic needle-eye, themselves turning in a whirl out under their linked hands to disentangle the twist when all had passed through. Now they themselves in turn dashed through the goal formed at the other end, and in these monotonous sports they found the highest enjoyment—youth and pent-up animal spirits, now allowed free scope, extracting pleasure out of mere exercise, enhanced by the absence of care, a fine evening, and the society of their companions.

Occasionally, as the ball in its flights might come a little nearer than was desirable, there arose a shout of mingled laughter and screaming, and a race ensued to the road fence; and at critical points of the game there was a general suspension of their own quiet sport, and stretching of necks to get a better view of the manly strife in their neighbourhood, where each had brothers or young neighbours anxious to display their prowess in the sight of their fair well-wishers.

In the pauses between the games, Bryan, John Foley, and our other friends approached the group of women, and with flushed and shy faces received some praises of their prowess, mingled with reproofs for their heating and tiring themselves so excessively. Mac Cracken, at the end of the

second game, was not backward in presenting himself for a trifle of praise; indeed, when he considered the quantity received was not adequate to his merits, he threw in the complement with his own hands.

But now the signal was given for the third and decisive game, and each hurried to his post, and the strife was renewed with increased energy. Foley and Mac Cracken on the one side, Roche, Redmond, and the rest on the other, having strung their energies to win or—— But there was no "or;" win they would. Fast fell the powerful blows; hard were the jostles; heavy enough some of the falls; and to the lookers-on, all was a mass of uproar and movement, confused and hurried. At last, by a kind of tacit consent, the struggle was left to about eight on each side in the centre of the field, except when the ball was driven back by those on the outskirts. Angry feelings seemed rising fast in the breasts of the opposing chiefs, and women and girls approached nearer and nearer, urged by the sympathy which passion or earnest feeling is ever sure to attract. Every eye was fixed on the central space where the strife was fiercest; and while Bryan and John Foley, with shoulder, foot, and hurly, were hotly contending, Theresa, whose eye seldom wandered from her lover for a moment, saw with dismay Mac Cracken and a robust ally, whose name shall rest untold, rushing from opposite sides (whether accidentally or by concert was never known), upon Bryan's devoted body. One instant more and they would be in the final spring, when, forgetting all but his imminent danger, she uttered a wild scream.

Edward had been so much in the habit of reading at his ease, of critical situations where he was aware he could be of no use, that he had acquired an unready habit in case of real pressing peril, and when presence of mind was essential. So though he saw the danger a moment before the cry, and was within a few feet of his friend, his powers were for the moment paralysed. The loved voice never heard in that key before, struck on Bryan's ear at the critical instant; and though bewildered for the moment, he seconded the timely aid of Redmond, whom Providence had guided to the spot. Seizing the collar of Bryan's waist-

coat, he gave him a violent chuck backwards, even as the fatal rush was taking place, and the charging shoulders of the adversaries, disappointed of their butt, dashed against each other, and only for a trifling obliquity in the line of charge, both might have been disabled for life. As it was, they fell to the ground, and there was little appearance of power in either of them to rise for a while. The strife was suspended for a few seconds, when John Foley, giving a vigorous stroke to the ball, dashed after it, to secure the deciding game in the interval of the panic. Edward, now angry with himself, and fully aroused, pursued him, and pressing close, he struck the sole of his foot in its rising from the ground, with his own toe, and pitched him several ridges forward. The ball was recovered, and sent like wild fire in the opposite direction, and two of the chiefs being low, the victory fell with ease into the hands of Bryan and his men.

Meanwhile, the two disabled players were in anything but a comfortable plight. No bones were broken, it is true, but each was seized with faintness, and a nausea at the stomach, and longed for the time to be laid on their beds out of the sight of the curious spectators. All resentment had left the minds of Bryan and his friends at the sight of their sallow countenances. Theresa's forces deserted her, when assured of Bryan's fortunate escape, but her mother and Mrs. Roche, and another friend or two, were at hand to give assistance, and keep off the general attention.

As soon as the game was won, Bryan and his allies approached the group, quite prepared to receive their congratulations; but they were too much occupied with Theresa, who, by a strong effort, was endeavouring to gain composure, to give the champions all the praise to which they considered they were entitled. Mrs. Roche in particular was very much agitated. Her resentment for the seeming treachery was extreme; but she also showed considerable dissatisfaction with her son for his want of watchfulness. According to her, there was an evident degeneracy among the present race of young men. "Ah! if her brothers who perished in 'Ninety-eight' were there, it is not by sleight of hand any of them would have got out of a

pinch!" However, seeing the chagrin felt by Bryan and Charles at this reception, she became mollified, grasped Charley's hand, and hoped that some one belonging to her would repay the good deed some day or other. While some trifling diversion was thus made in favour of our hero, he contrived to approach Theresa, and uttered—unfortunately the tone was so low that neither the bystanders nor myself were anything the wiser of the exact words, but we could form a very shrewd guess as to their import. Though it would be out of nature for Theresa to feel any but happy emotions at the rescue of her lover, and pleasure at the sight of his manly honest face, she mentioned in a low tone her wish to avoid any extra attention, and asked, "What wonder could it be that she was frightened at the danger of a friend of so long standing; that she was merely the first to perceive it, as she was standing on a hillock," etc., etc.

So Bryan was obliged to content himself with these generalities, and besides, all further discourse was impeded by the approach of Nicholas, leaning on the arm of John Foley. When he came near enough, he addressed Mrs. Roche, and hoped that she would bear no grudge for any accident happening in the ordinary course of play, and while the excitement was strong; and he begged her to believe him that there was no understanding whatever between him and his comrade; that each was merely so intent on victory, and a wish to give their chief opponent a fall, that they took no notice of each other. "Now, dear ladies, I am sufficiently punished by my hurt and your displeasure, which I hope will not endure beyond sunset. Remember that all arose from my earnest ambition to stand high in your esteem and notice. Mrs. Roche, favour me with your hand in sign of pardon."

Our Irish girls occasionally exhibit an unpleasant phase of disposition (whether they are imitated by foreigners is worth enquiring). No matter how much pleasure or pride any young girl present felt in the prowess of cousin or lover, they showed no symptom of it in the presence of their companions; but when the aforesaid youths came near, they met with nothing but jibes and banter. Per-

haps, after all, this derision was intended to mask feelings too cherished and tender to be allowed to appear.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TOM QUIGLY.

To show that we, the personal friends and adherents of Bryan, retained no resentment of what might have been only an accident in the course of play, Edward, Charley, and I returned with the bruised champions towards Courtnacuddy, each being supported by two unhurt boys, who relieved each other. Bryan had the delight and glory of conducting the women home in the other direction, and of enjoying uninterrupted conversation with Theresa, as Mrs. Roche had secured one or two auditors who had as yet not heard the "1798" exploits more than half a dozen of times.

When we came to what served for shop, school, and ale-house at the cross, a motion was made that all should have a glass of punch together, to drown any grudge or resentment that might be lingering about the corners of our feelings. The proposition was agreed to with little demur, and when Charles, and Edward, and I took the road again, we were, as far as a glass of punch to each was concerned, a little exalted by factitious spirits. "Factitious" is said advisedly, for I am sure that Mr. D.'s punch did not solely consist of pure alcohol, sugar, water, and lemon-peel. Adieu, Mr. D., school-master, tavern-keeper, master of the ceremonies to the village, news-oracle, and model of genteel deportment to the entire district.

As we returned we were joined by Tom Quigly, the eccentric huntsman of the castle. A rare fellow was poor Tom. He had but one fault, a weakness on the subject of strong drink, whether legal whiskey, illegal puttheen, or mulled beer. Who was a warmer friend when wanted than Tom? Who was so ready to fling off his coat and dig the grave at a funeral as Tom? Where could be got a better guardian of hound or hunting steed than Tom, or who could manage a pack, or conduct a chase of fox better than he? And still, twice ten times was he dismissed

from his employ, and yet a score of times did Tom regain his saddle. He had been as far as Moneyhore and the whiskey bottle, and hearing some confused account of the incident at the hurling match, his wrath exploded against every one concerned. "Oh, by the piper," said he, "why wasn't I there, and my friend Bryan in such danger! Ned, my boy, I consider you no better than an old hound for letting Charley here get in, and pluck him out of the claws of his ill-wishers—ay, rascals and turnspits, I say. And, Cahir, I have a crow to pluck with you. How dare you interfere and I at hand? To the 'Old Boy' with all bad liquor I say; and may all sheebeen keepers that mix blue stone and *acafortis* with real wholesome whiskey be most exquisitely and genteely excoriated, sewed up in foxes' skins, and I after them with the hounds. That reminds me of our gentlemanly landlord. Boys, Mick D. is a real gentleman, I uphold; it's a pity his poor legs have drunk so much bad ale and beer; and these same legs put me in mind of Jack * * * that lives up there near Grange. Very fine place, Grange! lawn and avenue in front, groves at each side, mountain at the back. I never got a better tumbler of punch in my life than in the same house, Squire Richards' I mean, not the one owned by the man of the legs. But this Jack * * * I told you who he was before, was hurling one Sunday thirty years ago."—"Steady, Tom: are you sure it is thirty?" "It was twenty years before the rebellion, and it is about twenty since. Twenty from twenty—that wont do: twenty from 1818 leaves—leaves—what does it leave, Harry?" Thus appealed to, I set him to rights, and this completed his confusion. "1798, 1798, the very year of the rebellion! I tell you, you little teetotum, it was not the year of the rebellion; it was twenty years before." "What I told you was, that 20 from 1818 left 1798: I said nothing about the rebellion," "May the ——— rebellion you; who is talking of the rebellion? Any how it can't be ninety-eight years ago, for Jack was alive till very late, with his legs like two gate-posts. May be if people got real good home-brewed beer and pure whiskey, and could follow the hounds every second day, and if their wives would give them peace, they

might live to ninety-eight years. But not to make a short story long—I mean, not to make a long story short: —that's not it neither. Ned, what do I mean, do you know? No matter. Charley you thought yourself very clever the day the young master left me at the old stables to look after the sick mare, and no one in the place but you and myself,—myself and you. To be sure I felt very lonesome and low-spirited, and I believe, took a drop too much, all the fault of the blue stone and acafortis——run to Lusk with it!

"So Jack, as I was saying, was at a hurling match ninety-eight years ago, I mean twenty years before 1798: that is—bedad, Jack is a great age. If he is still above ground, and I ever meet him over a tumbler, I'll ask him about it. Harry, you little insinuating son of a goosequill, if I was within arms'-length of you, I'd pull your ears for putting me out in my figures, and I the best arithmetician in Bowers's school in my youth. Poor Bowers! I think he was most superficially jealous of me the last two years, and troth he had no reason. So what had my good friend Cahir the impudence to perpetrate, when he sees the young master coming across the stream from the new stables? He lifts me up from where I was in a nice sleep on the dry litter, taking advantage of my unprotected state, like a shabby fellow as he was; and pitches me like a sack —me, the best whip from Blackstairs to Forth mountain, pitches me simultiniously into the far manger, and covers me with hay. And then, when the young master comes in and inquires for 'Quigly,' there was I snorting and puffing, instead of being on my pins, and giving intrinsic and significatory answers about the poor beast. I heard him, while I was half asleep, ask you, you interferential go-between, what noise was that at the end of the stable, and didn't you lay the blame on the restlessness of the dumb animals, like a Judas as you were! I am sure that if the same poor beasts had the gift of speaking with ease and affluence, they would give you the lie in the young gentleman's presence. However, after all, maybe you thought you were doing the right thing; you are a neighbour's child, and a relation, and I forgive you; but may I be most

extrinsically thrashed at the next fair of Ennisqorthy, if I don't give you such a rib-roasting that your mother wont know you, if ever you take such a liberty again with your superior in office, ay, and one that might be your father in weight, age, and poverty! I am sure we are related. *Aodh Mhor and Nicholaus Dhu* were brothers; *Maurtheen Dhoun*, Nicholaus's niece, nephew I mean, was married to *Mauyaidh Beg;* then *Shan Mohr* was her first cousin; but how near he was to your grandmother I forget. No matter. But, Jack, as I was telling you, only you will be facetiously interrupting me every moment, being at this hurling match, ninety-eight—no, twenty—no, a hundred and eighteen years since;—confound the Moneyhore whiskey I say! he plotted with another comrade to exquipulate a man that was courting his sweetheart, extempore. So the two rushed on my poor fellow like a pair of rams, when he was not expecting them. At the last moment he got a sententious glimpse of what they intended, and pitched himself back as flat as a fluke on the sod. The two rogues hit one another full charge, and Jack's two legs serves him for pillars of memorializing remorse from that day to this.

"Talking of memorializing legs, why did you leave Mick, the gentleman's, without taking the most punctilious satisfaction of that genteel bodagh, Mac Cracken? Back we'll go, and if he does not make the nicest, most sufficient and plentitudinous apologies, I'll spoil his beauty for him; I'll make a crooked disciple of him; I'll crack his crown for him."

Poor Tom's fit was now arrived at the decidedly quarrelsome stage, and we dreaded a scene; but as he turned round to execute his threat, his attention was taken by a gentleman on horseback jogging quietly towards Castleboro bridge. "Maybe this is MacCracken," said he, "and we will not have far to go." The cavalier now passed us; and Tom gazing after him with a face of drunken gravity, asked us if we knew him. "It is Mr. West, the Methodist preacher," said Redmond; "he is to stop at Mr. Graham's to-night." "West, West," said Tom: "that's right. We'll kill him, and I'll have his clothes." The idea so tickled

him, that he burst out into a drunken chuckle; and the preacher not knowing any of us, and beholding our suspicious gait (Tom's vagaries having communicated a certain unsteadiness to our united movements), quickened his pace, and was soon at a very respectable distance before us. The idea of Mac Cracken being now banished by that of the preacher, we had no trouble in getting him forward, and after striving to seduce Edward and Charles to gratify him at a round of the fists, he gradually slided into the stupid stage; and we succeeded in getting him to his own house, and surrendering him to the charge of his legal keeper, who appeared to have little welcome for himself or his fosterers.

CHAPTER XIX.

TOM'S BROTHER.

After getting down to the highroad again, "Here's a pretty piece of business on our hands," said Charles. "The preacher, who is an Englishman, and knows nothing of us nor of Tom, has taken his confounded words in earnest, and some mischief will arise. We must go down to Mr. Graham's, and have an explanation, or the report will go abroad that an English Protestant can't ride along the road in our country on a Sunday evening without imperilling his life. Bother Tom, and Tom's whiskey, and Tom's blue-stone, and Tom's aquafortis!"

We felt the wisdom of his proposal, and turned over the short lane that led to Mr. Graham's dwelling-house and mill, so nicely sheltered by the hill and the large trees at the back, and having in front the noisy river and the fir-grove before-mentioned.

On entering the large comfortable kitchen, with the bacon-flitches in the chimney, and sundry seasoned delicacies hanging from racks fastened to the ceiling, we found Mr. and Mrs. Graham sitting and chatting with some neighbours, and listening with a very unfrightened expression on their faces to the grievance of Mr. West, who was terribly put astray by this apparent want of sympathy in his troubles.

"You seem to think," said he, starting at the sight of Edward and Charles, "that I have been dreaming: well, here are three of his companions, let them deny it if they can." "Here is a pretty business, Charley," said Mr. Graham: "here's bloodshed and battery (in prospect) in our quiet neighbourhood. What ruffian has threatened the life of our respected guest, and how is it that O'Brien and yourself are found on a Sunday evening aiding and abetting such a criminal? Come, man, make a clean breast; confess, like a bigotted Papist as you are, turn king's evidence, denounce the culprit, and receive the fee." "Faith, sir," said Redmond, "you can secure the bloody-minded plotter with the greatest ease: he is now sleeping off his drunken villany in Tom Quigly's bed."

The smoke-stained ceiling of the kitchen never before nor since, rung with such a roar of laughter as arose at this piece of information, and the stranger felt for a moment completely bewildered.

As soon as Mr. Graham could recover his breath, he enlightened the victim as to the habits, occupation, and character of his dreaded enemy; and so with some self-annoyance at his mistake, and relief from fear, he held out his hands to us, and frankly begged pardon for the unintentional wrong he had done. "But, my friends," said he, "are you not conscious of profaning the Sabbath by those public and boisterous pastimes such as I understand you indulged in to-day, and in which, as I am informed, a couple of you sustained serious injury?"

Mr. Roche being a chance guest at the mill that evening, took up the reply. "I think, sir, though they have spent an hour or so in vigorous exercise without evil thought, or spiteful injury to their playmates, they may go to bed with an unburthened conscience."

Mr. West.—But how are we to keep holy the Sabbath day, if we do not devote the whole of it to prayer, listening to sermons, and communing with God by meditation, reading, or edifying discourse?

Mr. Roche.—It is in the power of saints, whose lives are one act of devotion, to keep their minds and hearts raised to the Lord. Even to devout persons not so much favoured,

who walk in earnestness, it is practicable and easy to devote the whole day to pious exercises; but it is beyond the power of the general mass, even of well-intentioned young people. They can afford to say their morning prayers, hear or read a good book, attend Mass, hear a sermon, or teach catechism; but it is unwise to deny them some innocent relaxation in the afternoon."

Mr. West was not convinced of the soundness of this view of the question; and as neither of the arguers made a proselyte of the other, there can be no advantage in detailing the argument that ensued.

The discourse becoming general, several topics were introduced and handled, among the rest the rising of 1798, and Mr. Graham detailed a portion of his own experience.

"At the time of the rebellion, I was seized on by a party of the 'Babes of the Wood,' and would have been piked or shot only for the exertions of Mogue Dixon that lives beyond the bridge. Under his protection I became rather careless, and besides, I did not like to leave my good woman to pine at home by herself; we were then twenty years younger than we are now, so the company will excuse the oversight. One fine morning I was secured as I was opening the door by a strange party of the United Men, and bid to prepare for death. I begged of them to wait till I would give a few directions, and so sending for Mogue, I requested another specimen of his influence over his fellow-labourers.

"There were, however, two or three among the new comers, who were not particularly fond of my humble patron; and when poor Mogue set about his kind office, these brave youths gave him to understand that if he said much more, he would get a knock on the head himself. So being thrown on my own resources, I addressed them with as much composure as I could, and begged them not to kill me on the spot, as my wife was daily expecting to be confined; and if they took my life there, they would probably have her death on their consciences also. 'Take me to head-quarters at Courtnacuddy, boys,' said I, 'and if your chiefs there consider me deserving of death, I have nothing further to say.' Some were for not listening

to me, but as they were all going towards Enniscorthy, and saw no great harm in allowing me an hour longer to live, my petition was granted.

"We set out, and came in due time to the cross of Courtnacuddy, but I had there so many well-wishers mixed among the strangers, that my life was spared, and I got a 'safe-guard' signed by two or three of the chiefs, which made my mind easy for the rest of the time. I suppose Mrs. Graham would not care to hear or tell of her own sufferings till she saw me safe again. She was brought to bed of a dead infant, and it has not pleased God to send us any child since that time of terror."

The discourse quitting the dismal subject of *Ninety-eight*, Mr. West for a little time spoke very feelingly on drunkenness, and at last expressed a hope that Tom had no near relative subject to his own weakness. Now it happened that Tom's brother, Jem, (whom we have already met at Courtnacuddy chapel) happened to form part of the present assembly; he was his brother's, opposite in every respect, a solid-built man, of an immoveable countenance and staid carriage, and the reverse of Sleeveen in conscientiousness. Little need had the master of Castleboro or his steward to inspect Jem's work from year's end to year's end; still he was not without his failings. No doubt but Lord Carew was a person of consequence in his eye, but Jem's wife and Jem himself were always in the foreground of Jem's mental pictures.

Redmond.—Thomas's mother always asserted that this little man (slapping him on the thigh, and making him start) was a full brother of his. What is your own private opinion, Jem?

Jem.—Well, I'll stand up for my mother's honour, any way, or, indeed, I would not care how you settled the matter." Jem spoke his words steadily and with a sort of thick lisp; but the reader will excuse the repetition in print, and fancy the change in sounds if he likes; thus *cath* for cat; *goodh* for good, etc. "What did he do the other day, but challenge myself to a boxing-match, because there was no other one in the company that would gratify him! We were just sitting down at Mick D.'s, taking a

little refreshment on our road home from the market; and while we were so *cooramuch* drinking to one another's healths across the table, in bowled master Tom. He reeled about, and examined everybody's face, and he says to one man, 'Sir, do you know that one of your eyes isn't straight?' and to another, 'Will you please tell me what gave that twist to your nose?' He found fault with *Shemus Gurm* for having black teeth, and asked Jem the *Gow* 'if it was with the poker he washed his face that morning?' When he found them all laughing at him instead of getting angry, he threw off his coat and rapped the table. 'Is there no particularly ugly, insignificant, miserly, little scradeen in the room,' says he, 'that will turn out like a good fellow, and exchange a dozen of blows for the honour of their townland?' Then he had the impudence to ask me how I could disgrace my family by drinking with such a set of cowardly skulks; and if I didn't turn out for the honour of the name of Rathphelim, he'd lick me from head to foot.' Some one that knew his failing gave him a strong glass, 'to *study* his fist,' as he said, and that set him talking about some other thing, till he was overcome with the liquor.

"Oh dear, how queer the world is! Now if the master gave him his walking paper once, he gave it to him twenty times; and he never caught me idling at my work, nor late in the morning, but twice in my whole life; and yet, I'll engage that he cares more for Tom's little finger than my whole soul and body. I don't think a party of visitors ever goes with him through the grounds but he tells them of these two mischances, and sets them laughing like mad; and I'm sure I can't see anything at all to be laughed at about them.

Mr. West.—It is strange that if you are as punctual as you say, he treats you with less kindness than your brother, who, it appears, gives him so much trouble.

Jem.—Sir, he's not less kind to me than to Tom, but he's more kind to Tom than to me.

Mr. West.—A distinction without a difference, Mr. Quigly.

Jem.—Well, now, I think that a gentleman of your learning, and travels, and experience might see a differ-

ence. As I don't know logic or elocution, I'll mention what happened to Pat Behan when he was driving the plough one day. I suppose you don't know Pat, or Jem the smith, his father. I'll never forget the answer Pat made me the day that Solomon D. was hanged above there in Ballindonny for the murder of Mr. Frizelle. I saw Pat skelping along without a cap or a hat on his sun-burnt hair. 'What's the hurry, Pat?' says I. 'I'm going to see the execution,' says he. 'And what good will that do you?' says I. 'My father gave me leave to go,' says he, 'to take a *patthern*.' 'In throth, then,' says I, 'it's a purty patthern you'll see; but wilful will have his way.' However, this is not what I was going to tell you. Pat was driving the plough on the *Premisee* above Courtnacuddy for Marianne Howlin. It's poor land enough the same premisee; and the wind and the rain were coming all day, full pelt down from Blackstairs. When the horses were going one way, they had the storm on their left sides; and as Pat was obliged to be on that side, too, he got the benefit of the wet on *his* left side, and the *maa* on that leg was soon like brown paper soaked. When they were coming back, he was sheltered by the horses, and so when evening came, and Pat was standing before the fire while Marianne was hurrying the supper, he looked down, and there was his left-leg maa below his ankles, and the other cocked out as it always was, at his *gam*. 'Oh!' says he, in a fright, 'I tell God's truth (that, sir, is a *cant* with the Courtnacuddy children), one of my maas is longer nor the other; but I'll soon remedy that,' says he, and he got Mrs. Howlin's scissors, and cut off the left leg even with the right. He tossed off his clothes as soon as he could, and left them near the fire to dry; but I'm sure you'd pity him next morning, when he drew on the leathern crackers again, and found the fresh-cut bottom, straight round the middle of his thigh. 'Oh, *vuya, vuya*,' says he, 'one of my maas is not longer nor the other now, but one is shorter nor the other.' Now, sir, I think you'll agree that I was not much astray in my observation.

Mr. West.—The victory is yours, I acknowledge: perhaps you would take the trouble of giving us the parti-

culars of the two mischances; you *do* tell a story so remarkably well.

Jem.—Thank you, sir: all the neighbours does be making the same remark. I was in *Iniscorfy*, you see, on *Sraft* Tuesday, and *becase* we could eat no meat again till Easter, I brought home a fine piece of fat bacon about four pounds weight. Well, sir, Molly boiled it to a turn with the best greens we could pick up in the garden, and down we *sot* about hafe-past six o'clock in the spring evening, to our potatoes, and greens, and bacon. 'Now Molly,' says I, 'dont be in a hurry; eat slow, and keep your appetite as long as you can, or we'll never be able to get thro' the half of this good dinner.' 'I will, Jem,' says she. So we tackled to, and talked away, and ate as slow as we could; but at the end of half an hour we could not get down a bit more, if we were to be made lords and ladies for it; and there was still left near two pounds of bacon and some greens. 'Well, now, Molly,' says I, 'this is too bad; see what a loss there will be, and not a single poor body near at hand to finish it! What's to be done?' 'I suppose,' says she, 'we must give it to the cat.' 'Well,' says myself, 'the *cath* is a good cath, but the *mate* is too good to be wasted on her.' 'What would you think,' says I again, 'of putting it in the *chimbley* till Easter!' 'Ah! dickens a one could eat it then,' says she, 'besides, I don't think it would keep.' 'Let us give it to one of Ned Hanton's children then.' 'Bah!' says Molly, 'it's little thanks we'd get for our generosity: they'd know we could not use it ourselves.' 'Still,' says I, 'something must be done: it would be a *tundherin* pity to have the bacon lost. I know what I'll do. I'll walk out on the Enniscorthy road as far as the slate quarry, and maybe, by the time I get back, I'll recover my appetite.' 'Do so, Jem,' says she. So I set out in the clear cold night, and began to think that great lords and ladies are not at all as well off as poor people thinks, with so much fine meat and drink wasted about them, and they having no wish for them; for I felt very *chuff* and uncomfortable, and was glad that I could not be in the same way again for six weeks and more to come.

"I bethought myself, at the same time, of so many couples that neglects to be married the whole year round till *Sraft* Tuesday; and then comes all in a heap on the poor priest, and he wont often have the last couple finished till midnight. Dear me, how little wit there is among people! and to think of the poor bride and bridegroom beginning a fast the day after the wedding, and sticking to it for seven long weeks! 'Dickens pity 'em,' say I: 'couldn't they get married at Christmas or Easter, or any other tide but Shrovetide?

Mr. West.—But why need they fast at all? We are not commanded in the New Testament to fast at particular seasons.

Mr. Roche.—I think, sir, you and Jem would soon slide into an endless discussion, if you entered on that particular point. If the Church has authority in matters of faith and practice, the bride and bridegroom must make up their minds to submit to the mortification, as they did not select their time with judgment. I'll engage, Jem did not delay till Shrovetide to put the ring on Molly's finger.

Jem.—You are not so innocent as a body would think, Mr. Roche. When I was young I had no more forethought than another neighbour's child. We'll say no more about it. When I came back we managed to demolish, between Molly and myself, about half what was left. Well, we felt ourselves then fairly beat, but still I would not give up without another struggle for it. So I went out again, and came down to the limekiln, there above, near the Cross. The night was cold, as I said before, and the half moon shining over the White Mountain, but I did not feel a bit chilly, and I was obliged to open my waistcoat, I felt so uncomfortable. I could hardly tell which was *strongest*, the steam from the kiln, or the steam from my breast. 'Well, Mr. James Quigly,' says I to myself, 'this is the last time you'll buy more bacon for Shrove Tuesday than Molly and yourself can make use of, without making Dick Shones Phoors of yourselves.' I came back after a-while, and we made the rest of the bacon look foolish before we'd done with it. Somehow or other we

did not sleep easy after this *fog*-meal; but we got into a heavy *sound* towards morning, when we ought to be thinking about getting up.

"To make a long story short, I was late at my work, and very much out of sorts; and who should I meet, and I going up through the fir-grove beyond the bridge, but the Master himself? Now see how things goes on in this world. Sleeveen, Murtheen, and Shan Fadh were late hundreds of times that they were not caught; and the only two times in my life that I happened to be late, I was pinned by the Master. 'Well, Coigly,' says he, opening his eyes, 'is the world at an end? Were you at a dance last night, or is Mrs. Coigly in an interesting situation? Come, unburthen your mind.' 'Faith, sir,' says I, 'Molly is too old now for a situation of any kind; and as to burthens, it's not my mind that's burthened any way,—and so I told my story. He strove to listen for a while, but I was not quite at the end, when he burst out a-laughing, set spurs to his pony, and left me there.

Mr. West.—Do you not think, Mr. Quigly, that what you did was a greater sin than eating a part of your bacon on Ash Wednesday in a temperate and thankful spirit? Or do you suppose that your abstinence for the whole Lent was sufficient to obtain pardon for that act of gluttony?

Jem.—Indeed, sir, I am sure that eating a single bit of it on Ash Wednesday would be a great sin for me, as it would be going against my conscience. The other thing I know was sinful also, and I hope I have repented of it, and that there is no great likelihood of my doing so again. So one sin wouldn't be better than the other, but one would be worse than the other, as Pat Behan said.

Mr. West.—How is it that you were late the next occasion? Was a pig in the way the second time?

Jem.—No, sir. I got enough of *pig* that once. The other time was in the depth of last winter, and Molly was just after buying a fine pair of blankets in Enniscorthy. We felt so comfortable after we lay down, that we didn't go to sleep for ever so long, the feel of the soft fleecy wool was so warm and pleasant. When we woke in the morning, and saw the dull look of the sky, and heard the wind

whistling down the chimney, be the laws, we could not find in our hearts to budge.

"At last I got in a fright, for I bethought of the bacon; but it was too late. I met himself and the pony, as sure as fate, in the same spot again. 'Was the bacon good this time, Coigly?' says he. 'Oh, to Halifax with it,' says I: 'will your Honor never be tired roasting myself and the same unlucky bacon? But if you feel any way chill this cold weather, let Molly buy such another pair of blankets for you as she brought home to ourselves yesterday; and I'll engage you won't be in a hurry to get up early for a month to come.' 'I'll make a bargain with you, Coigly,' says he. 'If I find you another morning late for the next twelve months, you will give a half crown to the dispensary: and if I cannot find you at fault for the same time, I will give you a guinea to buy bacon, or blankets, or a new gown for Molly, or whatever you will.'

"We are now within a quarter of a year of the time, and I hope to get my guinea. And that reminds me of going to bed early, for fear I'd oversleep myself, and I'd be caught then as sure as a gun. Good night, madam; good night, gentlemen; good night, neighbours: be the *Temo*, I did not spend an evening these seven years in such pleasant company. Won't Tom be *lude* of himself tomorrow when he finds he insulted so nice a gentleman!" And Jem departed, talking to the people within as long as he thought they could distinguish what he said, and then making some wise remarks for his own edification.

To Mr. West's relief, for he began to feel some interior trouble about misspending the evening, we all shortly afterwards separated, some of us weary enough after the fatigue of the day, and eager for rest and sleep: and for two miles round Gath-na-Coologe there was an abundance of sore and weary limbs at the levees of next morning.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HARVEST HOME.

In due time after that memorable Sunday recorded, Mr. Watt Greene was enabled to keep up the promise made to

us in his wheat field. The field stacks, made up from the stooks, were taken down one by one, brought home on cars, and skilfully made up into those large "haggard-stacks"—models for form, for economy in packing the greatest possible number of sheaves into a limited space, and for caution against interior invasion by wet. Mrs. Greene, and her daughters, and her servant-maids, and a few helpers, had been engaged from breakfast time in getting the mighty dinner ready—kitchen and parlour fires, and one or two in an outhouse, being fully occupied. The barn had been cleared out the day before, and in the course of the present morning was made as spruce as besoms and brushes could make it, and enlivened by two rows of tables, covered with clean table cloths, and furnished with dishes and well-arranged rows of plates, knives, forks, &c. Several fine bunches of full-eared wheat were suspended from the "collar-beams," chairs were settled at the ends of the tables, and the sides furnished with forms and stools, and those who were only used to see the place in its litter of straw, grain, and sheaves, were delighted with its now neat and orderly appearance.

Our festival took place when the gloomy weather of October was approaching. The invited were informed that dinner would be ready soon after two o'clock—a sufficiently late hour for working men accustomed to noontide for their principal meal. Some minutes before the hour specified, groups of labourers and small landholders were seen approaching; and on the lawn, and in the big yard, and even in the haggard, collections of threes, and fours, and fives, might be seen in Sunday dress, high stiff shirt-collars, well-greased shoes, clean grey stockings, and brushed hats, striving to look unconcerned, but all the while uncomfortable in their best clothes, and somewhat disturbed by unwonted idleness at an ordinary hour of labour. Mr. Dick Greene and his two fine young sons, Brian Roche, Charley Redmond, and Edward O'Brien, with some other farmer-folk of the better class, were in attendance as honorary guests, and these moving from one group to another, kept up their spirits near to the healthy spot, till the large dishes of potatoes, and meat, and cabbage were seen pour-

ing out of the back door, and crossing the yard to the barn. Then was heard the clang of the bell from its little campanile over the stable, and the junior members of the family, our dear old friends under Mr. O'Neill, Charlotte and Martha, and Rebecca and Richard, to whom this was a genuine gala day, and who had been playing tricks on every one in their exuberance of spirits from an early hour, now acted as whippers-in, collecting and hurrying this or that shy person from lawn and haggard, and all the outlying purlieus, till the chairs and forms were filled, and mighty slices of bacon or roast beef reposing on beds of white cabbage, began to be distributed by our "big farmer," and Mr. Samuel his son, and the young men already named.

The mistress of the mansion had no great trouble with the solid portion of the entertainment once the seats were taken. The good cup-potatoes, in ordinary cases forming a wedge whose broad back rested on the table, were here supplied in large dishes. The quantity of these, and of the sides of bacon, and rounds and ribs of beef first laid down needed no renewal. Instead of the ordinary noggin of milk which each guest was in the habit of seeing at his right hand, he found a jug or big mug full of good home-brewed beer, such as a Dublin epicure could not obtain in his habitat at any price. No need of waiters hurrying to and fro to attend to the wants of the guests. Every carver generally supplied to his own clients as much meat and cabbage at once as he could consume; the potatoes were there in abundance, and black-jacks stood at intervals to supply the mugs or jugs with the appetizing draught.

The good-natured frolicsome children desired no better fun than running with these jacks when they began to get low to the beer barrel at the end of the building, filling and carrying them to their stations, generally pulling the ear of the person to whom they handed the vessel, if they found the eyes of father or brother turned away, and indulging in hearty outbursts of childish merriment—the sweetest sounds in creation. The son of the house and the other carvers, seated at the ends and sides of the tables, kept a sharp eye on their neighbours, to see that

they were duly honouring their meat and drink; and if they saw any one failing to make progress, sometimes threatening to report them to the Master, who occupied himself in moving from post to post, and attending to the general comfort of the convivial gathering. The general satisfaction of the company was not without its drawbacks. There were many seated there who could artistically handle spade, shovel, or flail, but to whom the manipulation of knife and fork was an uncomfortable business. Cutting and conveying meat to the mouth was endurable in its way, but to use two unfamiliar engines for removing the skin from the potato, an operation so easily and naturally performed by the nails of the first and second fingers—this was the one bitter drop in the chalice of delight. Oft times would the practitioner, poising in air the knife with which he intended to do the deed, extend his fingers, and scientifically peel the wholesome root, the point of the weapon threatening his left eye the while.

There was, without doubt, some awkwardness in individuals of our happy party, but no vulgarity in its repulsive sense. There were present persons of at least five castes, from the mere labourer to him who, if his lands were freehold, instead of being rented, would be considered a gentleman of consideration. Some were in a little awe of those above them, others wished to preserve the esteem of those below them, and the result, as it regarded the conversation and demeanour of the assembly, was agreeable. There was, indeed, some oppressive assumption exhibited by the son of one of the small farmers of the neighbourhood, now a clerk in a "haberdashery emporium," as he was pleased to call it, in New Ross, but it did not effect much mischief. He was certainly very tiresome, with his consequential parties in the town, and what Mr. Tottenham, and Mr. Frizelle of Old Ross, and Mr. Lambert of Carnagh, said to him, and what he said to them, and, "'pon his honour, he found in the wide circle of acquaintance that he made in Ross from all parts of the country, that Protestant landlords were much better liked by their Catholic tenants than the landlords of their own sort; that it would be all very well if such a day as they were enjoying could happen

once in a month or so, but, 'pon his honour, he was afraid he could not take to country life again, with his shoes heavy with the wet clay of the fields, and he having to work in the heat, and the cold, and the rain, and eat potatoes twenty-one times a week for novelty, and not see a cup of tea oftener than Sunday evenings, and a tumbler of punch hardly once a month; nor hear a song sung by note, nor enjoy the delightful music of a piania," etc., etc., etc. The subject matter of this was bad enough, but he made it worse. He had an impediment in his speech, aggravated by affectation, which resulted in half his words being most disagreeably lengthened by the syllable *oi* repeated four or five times. He evidently considered this a beauty in delivery, or, as he would phrase it, delivering his sentiments in a "slap-up style."

A neighbour of the shopman's father, well aware of the poor style of living in which he was brought up, gave him a bit of his mind as soon as he could find an opening: "Ah! then, Mr. Casey—I suppose I must say Mister now, though I was often obleeged to say, 'Shamus, you thief, will you let my apples alone!'—Mr. James, did you ever hear of Tom Lamb's son, of *Ross-street* (Rossdroit) when he came home from Lunnon, where he went wonst with Mr. Hinson? He was sittin' one side of the fire, and his father the other, and they worn't sayin' anything for a while, till the cat came up, and sot on the harth, and looked up in his face. 'Ah, then, ould gentleman,' says he, 'what do you call this long-tailed beggar?' 'Jack,' says the old man, 'maybe that'll larn you,' giving him a welt across the shoulders with a good black-thorn kippeen he had in his hand, that made him jump, I give you my word. 'Purshuin', says he, 'to all consated scoggins, that if they only lived in Inniscorfy hafe a year, wouldn't know themselves at the end of it.'" The buck was a little taken aback when he heard bursts of laughter rising round him on every side; but it is likely he had recovered his self-complacency before he reached the Maudlin next day, on his return to his tapes and bobbins.

Meanwhile Mrs. G. had some of the neighbours' wives and daughters at dinner within the dwelling-house, where

it may be supposed they spent their hour or two as comfortably as their husbands and brothers did abroad. The *Vanithee* herself visited the banquet-hall at the moment when she understood that the "noble rage of thirst and hunger had ceased;" and after kindly addressing a few words to her guests, invited them to take their hats, and enjoy a little fresh air, while her helpers would be clearing the room, and making it fit for them to take a glass of punch in comfort by-and-by. She went up to where blind Neddy Martin, our fiddler, was sitting, and cordially shook hands with him, and hoped he would not over-fatigue himself when the dancing began.

So they all turned out, and broke into different groups. Some went into the orchard, to spy if any misguided apples had stayed so long on their stems; some walked down the road, and others enjoyed a promenade on the delightful lawn sloping to the river; not a few inspected the economy of the stables, and cow-houses, and haggards, and wondered if the mice and rats would succeed, after climbing the straight posts of the stack-frames, in crawling along on the under side of the slates with their heads downwards, and so get to the ledge, and up among the corn. If they did not take some useful hints home with them, it was not to be imputed to their entertainer, who, as industrious and skilful and frugal as he was hospitable, managed his farm capitally, taking his day and his locality into account.

By the time of their return, which was regulated by another touch of the bell, it was night-fall, and the barn was found lighted up for a dance, in the style later to be described, several large punch-jugs, full of the steaming liquid, on the tables, and tumblers, small jugs, and large mugs, where lately the table groaned under the weight of solid food. The master took the head of one table, and his son, and Roche, and Redmond, and O'Brien, disposed themselves as before. Mr. G., filling his tumbler, stood up, and made a very short speech, thanking the company for the friendly aid they had given him on former occasions, and expressing the pleasure he felt in seeing them enjoying themselves before him. So he drank their healths. "Long and happy might they live, and often might he have the

pleasure of enjoying their company again." So he took a good pull at his tumbler, and several were jumping up to return the compliment, but Redmond made a sign to them to sit still while he acted as their spokesman. So he arose, and, in the name of the company, thanked their hospitable entertainer, paid some complimentary remarks to himself and family, and enlarged a little on the friendly terms on which they and their neighbours of a different form of faith lived. Finally he called on all to rise, and drink the health of Mrs. G. and the young ladies, and their host and his son then present.

This toast received all the honours; and then the chairman returned thanks on the part of his wife and daughters, and proposed the healths of the Castleboro family, which was drunk uproariously, Bryan Roche taking occasion to say that he would have great pleasure in telling the young Master next day how the good wishes to himself and family were received. So it went on, the jugs being replenished again from supplies sent from the kitchen, and borne by some of the fat and fair domestic Hebes and their young male friends.

The company now discoursed of the election of young Mr. Carew and Mr. Cæsar Colclough to represent the county in parliament; the loyalty of the old gentleman to his country before and after the Union; the murder of Mr. Frizelle, in Ballindonny on the side of Cooliagh; the wet season; the great floods in the Boro; the great bursting out in the mountain about seven years since, when such a flood as was never before heard of, rushed down, and swept haycocks and everything before it; the comet, and the great snow about the same time, etc., etc.

It was not the intention either of the host or his guests to turn an entertainment into a debauch. So when Bryan observed some signs of glazed eyes, and the telling of stupid stories across the tables, he asked permission to request the presence of the women and girls from the house, that they might have a few songs before the dancing commenced, and in the meantime punch-jugs, and mugs, and all might be cleared away.

So the vessels were removed into the "big house," the

tables rubbed, and the girls and women came in, and room was made for them by the sides of friends and near relatives, and the ladies of the house came and occupied seats near the master. The bustle having a little calmed down, a general call was made on Mr. O'Brien for a song. He "made no more work about it" than to ask what they wished for, and when the choice was left to himself, he said he would give them one of those English ballads that he never saw in print, but that had been naturalized here a long time. It was strange that they should still be remembered. So out he sang in a manly mellow voice :—

"THE LADY AND THE FARMER.

"There was a rich noble of late we do hear,
And he had one daughter was comely and fair;
A great many suitors admired his fair child;
But by none of these suitors her heart was beguiled.

"Her father he died when she came of age;
To visit her workmen she rode in her chaise;
A handsome young farmer she there did espy,
And with rapture upon him she soon cast an eye.

"He whistled so loud that the valleys did ring,
And his cheeks were like roses that bloom in the spring;
His features were comely, his hair a dark brown—
She never saw finer in country or town.

"Home to her castle this lady she goes,
She dressed her fair person in officer's clothes,
With her sword by her side she went to the grove,
And the ploughman was pressed by the Captain of Love.

"To the farmer so frightened the lady she said,
'Come, come, jolly ploughman, and join the parade,
I'll leave you no longer to plough and to sow,
But abroad for a soldier with me you must go.

"'You are handsome and proper and fitted to shine,
With laced hat and feather, and scarlet so fine;
Abroad you will go, and your captain I'll be,
And a lady will court you of noble degree.'

"In a room in her castle her love she confined,
But she soon changed her clothes and she told him her mind.
In his arms he embraced her, and solemnly swore
That the Captain of Love he would ever adore.

"To the church went this couple the very next day,
And there they were married without more delay.
How happy's the ploughman, how altered is he,
From a farmer's estate a rich noble to be!"

After some comments on the song, which seemed to interest the young people mightily, Edward called on a young damsel, who, after a little pressing, turned her face towards a dark corner, and began a genuine Wexford lay. We can afford room to the first verse only; it was usually known by the name of the "Banks of the Urrin," by John Rogers.

"One evening by Urrin's gay margin,
Through the woodlands for pleasure I strayed;
The evening being calm and delightful,
The trees in green verdure arrayed;
The warblers harmoniously singing
While the echoes responsively tuned;
Through the foliage the blue bells were springing,
While nature so beauteously bloomed."

Of course a lovely maid was found reposing by the margin, and all the powers of nature and art invoked to sing her charms. Charley, being invited by the fair minstrel, gave them

"THE BANTRY GIRLS' LAMENT FOR JOHNNY.

"Oh who will plough the field, or who will sell the corn?
Or who will wash the sheep, an' have 'em nicely shorn?
The stack that's in the haggard, unthrashed it may remain
Since Johnny went a-thrashin' the dirty King o' Spain.

"The girls from the *bawnoge* in sorrow may retire,
And the piper and his bellows may go home and blow the fire;
For Johnny, lovely Johnny, is sailin' o'er the main,
Along with other *pathriarchs*, to fight the King o' Spain.

"The boys will sorely miss him when Moneyhore comes round,
And grieve that their bould captain is nowhere to be found;
The *peelers* must stand idle against their will and grain,
For the valiant boy who gave them work now peels the King o' Spain.

"At wakes or hurling-matches your like we'll never see
Till you come back again to us, asthore, gra-gal-machree!
And wont you throunce the buckeens that shows us much disdain,
Bekase our eyes are not as black as those you'll meet in Spain.

"If cruel fate will not permit our Johnny to return,
His heavy loss we Bantry girls will never cease to mourn;
We'll resign ourselves to our sad lot, and die in grief and pain,
Since Johnny died for Ireland's pride in the foreign land o' Spain."

It came next to the turn of our old acquaintance Joanna Lacy to entertain the company, which, after a little pressing, she did with the pastoral of the "Valley Below," with the omission of which our readers will be more than satisfied.

After one or two ineffectual demands by the fair and fat songstress, she appealed to Charley to relieve her, which he did without inflicting any excuses on the company.

He explained to his hearers how Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Wiseman, the well-known teachers, once contended to see who would hold out longest in alternate verse, singing the praises of a free-trader in beer, whiskey, and tobacco—a certain sheebeen-house keeper, Daniel Brann by name; and then proceeded to relate the poetic strife. Of the hundred quatrains to which the original lay extended, he gave twelve, but on the present occasion half that quantity will suffice of this—

"BATTLE OF THE BARDS.

"Two schoolmasters, no poetasters,
Met upon a certain day,
Resolved to rhyme just against time,
Their wit and learning to display.

"Says Neil to Wyse, 'You are no prize,
Unless you clearly show you can
Hold out with me, till all may see
Who'll longest sing of Daniel Brann.'

"Says Wyse, 'You'll see that I shall be
Your maeter during time's long span,
For learning bright will keep me right
Before the sight of Daniel Brann.'

"'Now Wiseman, pass the sparkling glass,
And be an ass—short as you can:
The neighbours know, both high and low,
You're not my match in Daniel Brann.'"

And so the poetic contest held on, all bristling with personalities and compliments read backwards, the pro-

posed touchstone of their wits being completely ignored. Mr. O'Neil thought fit at last to revert to it after receiving rather a sore hit or two :—

"'Daniel Brann's a gay old man ;
His praises in my verse must shine.
He sells good drink, and pays no rent,
And o'er his door he keeps no sign.'"

But here Mr. Wiseman's patience failing, he ended the contest with one sweeping stroke of his two-handed sword :—

"'Mr. O'Neil, if you don't fail,
I will go bail that I'm the *plan*.
If you proceed, I will indeed
Sing for a week of Daniel Brann.'"

Brian Roche being appealed to, gave, in strong but pleasing voice, a lamentation of the class to which belongs Burns's lament for his Poor *Mailey*. The Irish bard either was not capable of, or cared nothing for, "raising the waters." There is another version of the dirge which we have been unable to recover.

"THE WIDOW'S PIG.

"It is not Morgan Rattler,
Nor neither is it *Garraan Bui*,
The Royal Blackbird, Tristram Shandy,
Nor that new thing called Langolee ;
The sweet *Ceann Dhu*, the Bonnet Blue,
The Colleen Rua, and Irish Jig,
Must all be mute without dispute,
Nor dare confute the Widow's Pig.

"She was beauty without paint,
She was nate-made, both round and tight ;
Her colours they were various—
Of large spots both black and white ;
With a circle round her neck,
Tow'rds which the *bells* they did incline ;—
Dame Nature did endeavour
To frame her the best of swine.

"As she roved out one morning,
Her royal helpmate for to meet,
The cabin curs pursued her,
And overtook her in the street.

Her ears they tore in ribbons,
  Her hams they fleeced with tooth and nail,
And in the gore they left her
  All from her snout unto her tail.

"I placed her on the hearthstone,
  A sod beneath her head I laid,
In hopes she would come to herself,
  And keep the cabin o'er our head;
At last her eyes she opened,
  Saying, 'Mistress dear, will you sit still,
I'll make you the executor
  To my last testament and will.

"'My curse light on you, Tiger!
  And may the halter be your due!
Bad win' to them that reared you,
  Or any of your murd'ring crew!
My bristles give the *gracy*,
  For him to mend the naybours' brogues,
And make a halter of my skin
  To gibbet all sheep-stealing rogues.

"'My *crubeens* will be just the thing
  To hold the *thotheen* at the wakes,
And turn all that's left of me
  To puddings and the best pork-steaks.'
She turned her face unto the wall,
  And passed away without a groan.
Good neighbours all come round me,
  And sing with me her ullaghone!"

The last melody we shall quote is of English origin. It was sung by a servant of the "big house," a well-looking, ignorant, but susceptible damsel, to whom a few loving words said to her in private by Paddy Meyler made up the summum bonum of existence, but who would scratch at Paddy's face, or, if at table, throw a potato at him, if he attempted to address a word of pleasantry to her. Her voice was marvellously sweet, but she made only poor sense of parts of the ballad, which must here be called—

"THE INDIFFERENT DAMSEL.

"'Come sit you down, my darling,' he said,
  Upon this meadow so green,
For I think it is seven long years and more
  Since together you and I have been.'

'I'll not sit down with you,' she said,
Now, nor at any other time,
For you've given the rose to strange young girls,
And left me the rue and thyme.

"'I'll not believe what an old man says,
For his days they are not long,
And I'll not believe what a young man says,
For he's sworn to many a one.
He's sworn to many a one, my dear,
And many a false story he'll tell;
But when he has gained a young maid's heart,
It's to you, pretty girls, farewell.

"'*T* stands for Thomas, as I suppose,
And I for my love John;
W it stands for Sweet William,
But Johnny is a truer one.
And I will climb a higher tree,
And rob a richer nest,
And come down again without a fall,
And wed the man I love best.'"

It may be ill-naturedly remarked that the subject-matter of this ballad is obscure; that there is a want of some connecting stuff evident between the last two verses; furthermore, that the various pieces do not possess merit sufficient to entitle them to preservation. But let our caviller remark that these identical pieces are selected as they were in reality popular at the time and in the place where the action of our sketch occurred. We will not defend the taste of the company. A number of people disposed to be entertained merely required that the singer, male or female, should have a sweet voice, and that the air should be good. These conditions granted, they resigned themselves to enjoyment, and forgot to criticize.

So calls were made and attended to, and many bits of good, bad, and indifferent composition chanted; but when a desire of change of entertainment began to manifest itself among the more youthful portion of the assembly, the tables were transferred to the yard, Neddy tuned his fiddle, and Mr. and Mrs. G. commenced the dance with a minuet. After the young ladies had favoured Roche and O'Brien with their hands in a reel, they retired along with the seniors; and jigs, reels, and country-dances quickened the

spirits of the party under the supervision of our friends, and the sons of Mr. Dick and Mr. Watt. The weariness and ill-effects of a too-prolonged festival were not experienced, for all had quitted the premises by twelve o'clock.

Thus ended, and thus will end, many a scene of harmless social enjoyment, and H. W., as he concludes the account, finds his heart sink, reflecting on the departure or separation of so many friends so full of life and spirits on that evening.

Book II.

THE FRAMING OF THE PLOT.

CHAPTER XXI.

BACK LANE.

As I was not present at some of the incidents and conferences presently to be related, the veracity of this true and circumstantial chronicle may perhaps be brought in question; but the simple fact of my learning from the persons interested, the various occurrences and the heads of the conversations, will naturally put these objections to rest, and infuse a lively and vigorous belief into my readers —may their name be "legion!" And now, with a most determined resolution to avoid useless and long-winded fireside conferences, and conduct my audience, if I can, through the cunningly involved mazes of as intricate a plot as was ever imagined by the ingenious and good-natured G. P. R. James himself, I invoke the kind spirit of the inimitable Miguel de Cervantes, and rush into the tangled maze. "Viva St. Iago, and charge, Spain!"

The mornings were beginning to have a damp feel about them; the leaves on the trees had turned yellow, and red, and brown, and were strewing the roads in and about the demesne; and the winds had a mournful sound as they whistled through the thinly-covered branches of the large trees; and the dry seed-pods of the ash made dismal music, as they clattered against each other or fell on the hard road. The out-door occupations began to be conducted in a sleepy style; threshing flourished within the barns; and Nicholas and his father-in-law presumptive were sitting on a Thursday evening in Enniscorthy, in a little tavern in Back Lane, whose proprietor's name, in common with better things, has faded from memory: they were refreshing themselves on pigs' feet, white bread,

and strong punch, after disposing of some good loads of corn.

Mr. Nick was the entertainer, as the reader may suppose; and our thrifty old gentleman, feeling the withered folds of his heart softening and expanding under the influence of the punch, could not dispense with the ceremony of shaking his son-in-law elect by the hand every five minutes, and expressing the pleasure he felt in the hope of shortly reckoning him in the number of his family.

"Yes, Mr. Mac Cracken, you must become a gentleman-farmer, equal to Dick or Watt Greene; and Theresa will feel in time that she has been very fortunate in gaining your preference. I'll lay down a hundred and fifty pounds on the nail the day you put the ring on her finger, and I don't care how soon you can bring her round, the way I'll be out of trouble watching her from that big boy of a neighbour: I wish he'd look for a wife where he'd be more welcome!

"Still I've nothing to say *again* him, but that he'll never be a penny before a little *scullogue* of a farmer, nor be made right-hand man at the castle, nor make himself useful at elections, nor any where else. He'll never be anything better than a big schoolboy, nor be able to count fifty pounds of his own money together any day of his life. And there is another provoking thing, the attachment that *medhereen* of an Edward and himself have for one another. Oh, dear! what a plague that boy is to me! If any thing, no matter how profitable, has to be done in proper time and place, the idea of it becomes quite disagreeable to him; and he'll put it off from day to day till it is too late to do it at all; but if the most difficult or disagreeable thing jumps with his own humour, oh, won't he pursue it through fire and snow! To Halifax with all story-books and novels! No one ever taught the young brat his letters, nor a spelling lesson when he was a child; and before he was three years old he could read, from only looking over Mr. Bowers's shoulders from a chair behind him, when the little things of the school were saying their lessons. Poor Bowers had his school at the time within a field of our place, and all the wit in your head could not

keep the young thief out of the school. With all this quickness, he never wrote a line fit for a Christian to read, but there was not a story-book within four miles of him that he did not borrow, and precious reading some of them *was*. Now the great mischief of all this kind of study is, that it gives young fellows lonesome habits, and makes them shy, and puts notions of love into their heads too soon; and the first smooth-face that smiles on them becomes a goddess in their eyes, and precious worthless fat little goddesses some of them turns out in the end.

"All at once they settle on Miss Smoothface to be the ditto of the sentimental lady they were last reading about, and it is a mercy if they are not hooked into a marriage with some low creature or other, without fortune, or education, or handiness. So, after a year or two of married life, they find themselves tied down to poverty and labour, and the delights they expected to enjoy in mutual love all gone with last year's snow; and they get disheartened and fretful, and lose the little courage they had, and become a burthen to every one that cares about them. If I had my will of one of these confounded novel-writers that bring a scape-grace of a young man and a silly sentimental damsel through fire and water, to join their useless hands, and then tell their foolish readers that the rest of their united days went by in happiness—if I could work my will on him, I say, I'd make him go and lodge with them the seventh year of their marriage, and witness the sorrows of the poor misguided woman, striving to nurse her sickly infant, get the meals at proper times, teach and manage her other ragged, troublesome children, mend their clothes, and settle their disputes, toil for their support, and be perhaps badly clothed and slatternly herself, and feel her constitution failing every day. My *vagabone* of a novel-writer should witness all this for a twelvemonth, and help her partner in his troubles and toils, if he happens to be a good husband and father, or take the trouble of reforming him if he has turned out a scamp.

Nicholas.—Ah, that won't be the way with your well-informed, intellectual daughter and myself. I am not making her out a goddess or a novel heroine, but I can't

help saying that she combines in her lovely person all the charms of mind and body that are calculated to ensure matrimonial felicity; and it will be my supreme and self-allotted task, to make her future life one long happy day. But though I would gladly make her the absolute mistress and lady of myself and my terrestrial possessions seven times repeated, even though her temporal property consisted of the garments on her beauteous person, still, Mr. O'Brien, your liberal proposal is not unwelcome. I feel that my superior knowledge of agriculture cannot be developed on my present holding: therefore I contemplate the acquisition of the adjoining one, which shortly falls out of lease; and this sum, with my own reserve, will make things smooth. But, my dear father, for such you are in the veritable signification of the phrase, what if the young lady's heart is fixed on that flat, mindless, unpolished pet of Edward's? Force will not do, and if her mind's resolved, what are the means to use? As yet I have seen no responsive symptom of that affection by which my corporeal system is permeated.

Mr. O'Brien.—I am not able to tell whether her feelings for Roche are friendly esteem or strong affection. They were together from the time they were children, and were always like brother and sister; and young people in these circumstances don't often fall in love. This I do know; that if she has fixed her affection on him, she would not listen to the offers of a king's son. A few of these story-books have passed through her hands, and the slightest sign of his thoughts straying to any one from her, or of him keeping company with any one, good or bad, in woman's shape, will be a deadly offence in her eyes. She is so proud on some points, and has got such high-flown notions of constancy, that if once she is roused to anger by any thing she sees improper or inconstant in Bryan, she will give him up if her heart was to break, or her whole after-life be made miserable by it. We may succeed sooner than we think, by watching our opportunity, and striking while the iron is hot."

During the latter part of this speech the door opened, and gave access to Sleeveen, who had yoked the car and

brought it to the door in expectation of his chief being nearly ready for a homeward start. Mr. O'Brien did not stop his harangue for his retainer's presence, but filling out a glass of punch, and pushing it across the table, made a sign to him to be seated.

It may not be amiss to observe, that though Mr. O'Brien was not entirely unconscious of Sleeveen's bad qualities, the cunning fellow had so well studied his master's weak points, and practised flattery so skilfully, and fell in so well with his notions on domestic economy, and his ambitious views, that in spite of the general dislike felt for his utter selfishness and laziness by the rest of the family, he kept possession of the old man's ear, and used his influence for little that was good or generous.

"I beg pardon, gentlemen," said he, after a pause of a few seconds, "for making an observation. I'm sure you both will excuse it, as you know my great wish to see our handsome young mistress standing before the priest with your own self, Mr. Mac Cracken; and, indeed, I would not once wish it, if I knew any other gentleman-farmer in the seven townlands that was more worthy of the same young lady than yourself. Now, gentlemen, I need not tell you I'm a poor man, and would wish to have a little something I could call my own for the few years I have to live; and I'm as sure as the hearth-money that if I show myself eager to bring this match about, and to break squares between Miss Theresa and young Roche, I'll fetch down the wrath of every one of the two families upon myself; and you, master, will not be able to defend me from the whole force when put together. Don't let it into your heads that they don't care for one another; Roche would thrust his right arm into the fire if he thought it would give her pleasure; and if she does not regard him more than one neighbour's child need regard another, I don't know how to make use of my eyes or my ears, that's all."

Nick.—This is a terrible long-winded speech, Sleeveen; cut it short if you can, and let us know your object in making it.

Sleeveen.—Mr. Mac Cracken, I have two objects in view; one is a little security for my old age; the other is your

marriage with Miss Theresa. Let you and my master make the first certain, and I'll be warrant for the other myself.

Mr. O'Brien.—And pray, Sleeveen, what is the exact amount of the property we are to settle on you, and how can you bring about what you say?

Sleeveen.—Before I came in here just now, I was listening to the discourse of two people; and I have only to relate that same conversation to make Miss O'Brien hate and scorn her true lover as she thinks him; and you must be a poorer hand than I take you for, Mr. Mac, if between your skill in courting, her parent's wishes, and her own anger, she don't become Mrs. Mac Cracken before next sraft.

Mr. O'Brien.—I am afraid, Sleeveen, that this weak punch has got into your head; but if you are not dreaming, I promise you on my own part an acre of land rent free during your life, if you bring about this marriage, as you say you can; and I think I may engage for Mr. Mac Cracken that he will put a few guineas into your hand the day Theresa becomes his wife.

Nick.—Most cheerfully I subscribe to that engagement. Ten guineas are yours on that day, as sure as if you had them in your pocket this minute.

Sleeveen.—Well, gentlemen, nothing can be fairer; and as I must be content to be marked out for a black sheep in this business, you wont object, I suppose, to give me your promises under your hands. You can order in a sheet of paper, and a few scratches of a pen will do it."

Both men were somewhat elevated with the whiskey punch and the pleasant prospects held out by Sleeveen; and after sounding him once or twice on the solidity of his grounds, and the substance of the conversation he had overheard, they gave him the written promise required. The object was so desirable that both forgot to demand of their precious ally whether the means he proposed to use were strictly honest or honourable. If Mr. Mac Cracken was cool in the head, or had time enough for consideration, he would not by any means have sanctioned any thing that would not square with the gentlemanly

demeanour for which it was his life-long ambition to obtain a marked character. We will not enter further into the particulars of the conspiracy. At a certain stage of the evening's relaxation when the hilarity was at the point from which the transition to the maudlin state begins to be felt, Mr. O'Brien started up and proposed an instant departure, as he recollected that the Roches and a neighbour or two were expected to spend the evening at his place; and it would not do at all to give the enemy too much advantage.

"I hear that boy is in expectation of getting an enlargement of his farm, and that he is only waiting for it to make a regular proposal, but, *nabochlish*, we will find ourselves in the wrong box, maybe, before that comes about. Let us be on the move. If we can't hinder people we don't care for from taking up room at our hearths, we'll manage to let them do as little mischief there as we can. Eh, Sleeveen; and maybe put a little spoke in their wheel, my boy. Sleeveen, they have no great love for you at home; but you are attached to your old master, you rogue, you are; and, Sleeveen, when we bring about what we know, I'll—I'll—never mind what I'll do for you."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DANCE-SCHOOL.

Going before the worthy trio, we find most of our friends seated round Mrs. O'Brien's table, as happy as love and friendship can make them; and Pat Neil and Shān Burke enjoying leisure without dignity at the kitchen fire. Edward has got a half holiday, and will return to his duty to-morrow, and Bryan, seeing no envious nor hostile face about him, is in bliss, and Theresa's mind being also unruffled, she can heartily enjoy his unlucky exploits.

There is nothing like sensible conversation going on at the table. It is a babel of pressing, joking, laughing, and occasionally reproving when a youngster abuses his privileges; and at last there is something like a lull. Mrs. O'Brien cannot for love or money induce any one to de-

molish any more hot cake and tea; and as Neddy Martin, the blind fiddler of Ballynocrish, has accidentally paid the house a visit, and is never without his fiddle, the table is removed, and a dance commences, in which Mrs. Roche, Bryan, Edward, Theresa, little Pat and Peggy, Tom Sweetman, and Johanna bear their parts. If we were to relate all the incidents connected with dancing that took place during the twelvemonth which our story occupies, this little work would be swelled out of all proportion, and the interest of the story be interfered with, therefore we shall condense and collect all our reminiscences of the fascinating exercise into this point of the story, and be then more at leisure to carry fright and sorrow into the hearts of our gentle readers by detailing Sleeveen's dire machinations, and the woes they brought to the hearts of those estimable friends of our youth, in whose well-being we hope our audience has begun to take some interest.

Sunday afternoon was no period of rest to the poor priest who had the spiritual good of his people at heart. The fiddler wanted a couple of shillings, the sheebeen owner wanted to get off his doctored beer and whiskey, and the low murmur went through the country in the end of the week that a dance would be held *unknownst* to his Reverence in the barn or the paddock of the "Cat and Bagpipes" next Sunday evening; and if the priest could be kept in ignorance, the dance would be held, and the only aged people present would be a foul old reprobate or two, one of whom would be sufficient to infect the imaginations of all the youth of the country-side. We well recollect an old bald-headed rascal of the type. The very well-conducted young men and women would stay away, and few be present but boys and girls who had laboured hard during the week, and had no choice between going to sleep and a little excitement. They were there under a sense of committing sin, merely by being present; and recklessness, and the influence of loose and evil discourse and liquor had their usual effect. It was Donnybrook Fair on a small scale; and a boy taking to drink and a girl losing character continued to stamp these Sunday gatherings with a mark of infamy.

Sometimes the dance would be held at a cross-road, without the aid of beer or whiskey, generally on the border of a parish; and if the priest was seen approaching, flight would be taken into the neighbouring one, where they knew he claimed no jurisdiction. On one occasion a cunning artist having collected his victims on the Bridge of Ballymackesy, the extreme point of two parishes, and thus affording facility for flight into one or the other, as might be desirable, the priests of both parishes approached the position at the same moment.

Flight was, of course, resorted to, but the blind fiddler and his instrument were captured, and one of the clergymen, who had several times been foiled by the unscrupulous man of catgut, being very much irritated, did what he regretted a minute later—broke the fiddle. "Oh, sir," said the poor fellow, "you've now put me from earning a mouthful of bread, and me blind; and sure I don't belong to your congregation at all—I'm a Protestant." "Little credit you are to your congregation, and great harm to mine. But promise me you'll not come into my parish again to play on Sundays, and I'll get you a better fiddle than that." The promise was made. Father F—— gave him a couple of shillings for present need, and got from Perry of Kilkenny, a special good instrument, to console the victim, who kept his word, and caused no more scandal in that parish or its boundaries on Sundays.

Very determined was the character of the faces set against the sheebeen-house exercises by the Roman Catholic clergymen and heads of families. Not that they were intolerant of relaxation on the part of the boys and girls, or supposed any evil inherent in the capering of the young fellows' legs more or less vehement, or the shuffling of the young girls' pumps, half concealed by their long petticoats; but opportunities were hereby given for walking and talking with undesirable sweethearts, or sitting behind the assembly in unedifying proximity. It would be hard to light upon a youthful gathering without finding a few disreputable individuals, whose society would not more prudently be avoided.

A Sunday-dance would be occasionally held on a green

beside the *Thubber Gal*, or *Thubber Dherg*, near the village, or in the grassy circle of the old rath; and these were comparatively harmless. But the sheebeen owner would have his barn-floor or his paddock also at the disposal of the pleasure-hunters, and thereby get rid of his adulterated beer and whiskey; and however indulgent the priests might be to a meeting between "neighbours' children" in the big kitchen or barn of a farmer on a Sunday evening, with the heads of the family looking on, or occasionally lending their own old feet to the increase of the hilarity, they never would tolerate the proceedings of the scheming bonifaces. If they came, either by chance or design, on one of these ale-house gatherings, and a general dispersion did not ensue on their appearance, their riding-whips soon produced a dispersion.

To many a happy and careless son and daughter of the country, dancing came as easy as reading and writing to those primitive folks that lived in the reign of good King *Dogberry;* but teachers of deportment, steps, and figures, were not wanting to the dull and consequential portion of society. Four of these abide in our recollection as ruling in the barony of Bantry and the Duffrey from 1810 to 1820; but some of them had flourished long before, for they were lantern-jawed, bald-headed veterans at that period. Mr. Cheevers was a tall, athletic man, but Mr. Tench much excelled him in grand words and "gentility," though smaller in size, and not so springly in action. Tench had seen foreign parts, for a visit to Dublin was noted among the *fasti* of his career; he had, besides, a happy way of putting down derogatory observations directed at him. Having on one occasion dipped rather deeply into the punch-jug, and continuing to pour out eloquence not very intelligible or interesting to his company, one of them plucked up courage to say, "Mr. Tench, you are a great talker." "No, sir," said the offended professor; "I am not a talker—I'm a speecher."

It was once our good fortune to partake of tea and hot-cake at the same table with a professor that might have been own-brother to Mr. Tench, and if he derived any benefit from that social meal it was an extraordinary

fact. To show his superiority to the rough male sex that surrounded the table, he scarcely did a thing during the whole time of breakfast but press the mistress of the house to this or that portion of the edibles. "She wasn't eating anything—would she allow him to help her to this nice crispy bit of hot-cake? She was taking no tea at all—would she have another spoonful of sugar? Might he have the pleasure of helping her to a little more of that delicious French cream (whiskey)? Maybe her *cheer* was a leetle too near the fire. He hadn't seen so nice a diaper pattern on any teeblecloth for a month of Sundays. He was sure she *took* only two cups—would he have the pleasure of lifting the kittle for her? She hardly ate a smite of breakfast," etc., etc., etc., and so on, till the poor woman could not decide whether she should laugh or cry, so vigorously did he urge her to "make no strange" in her own house.

The teacher of dancing, when about to commence a quarter's campaign, *serenaded*, in company with his violinist, a district of eight or ten square miles, and summoned the boys and girls of a townland to meet at some central farmstead, cheered their spirits with some gratuitous jigs and reels, and while their minds were gay, made out his list for the ensuing quarter of nine nights, each pupil to pay "a thirteen" to himself and a tester (sixpence halfpenny) to the fiddler. A compass of four or five townslands thus completely filled the list of his disposable week nights, allowing Saturday for rest.

At last, the evening big with the expectations of many arrived; supper was disposed of at an early hour, and the barn was tidied up. If there were any sheaves left, they composed a compact *shass* in the end, and the long ladder, strewn with straw, and resting on stones, or other supports, lay along the wall for the accommodation of the young women when not employed on the floor. There was a seat for the fiddler, and perhaps a couple of chairs for the farmer and his wife, or any other honoured character, at the end of the large apartment opposite the shass, and some candles in sconces fastened to the walls, at fitting intervals, shed light on the business of the evening.

The young women on arriving, if familiar with the family, first made a visit to the big kitchen, paid their respects to the vanithee and her *old man*, had a few words with the young people, and deposited bonnet and shawl, or cloak, as it might be, on settle or dresser-seat, or perhaps the bed of the daughter of the house, and after some mutual inspection, and touches at each other's hair, and adjusting the combs at the back of the head, entered the barn in procession. If Mr. Tench had arrived, each lady made the best curtsy in her possession to that model of deportment, and then repaired to the long seat described. The master was most careful to return each lady's salute, feet in first position, cap pressed to waistcoat, and body bent. The cap was fashioned of skin of some kind, of a shining greyish colour, tinged with brown, and had a peak. So I remember it. As to the rest, Mr. Tench sported a tight knee-breeches, white stockings, turn-pumps, and a swallow-tail coat. The fiddler, Shamus Bowes, was lame of one leg, weak in an arm, and the forefinger of the poor man's left hand was mutilated by an accident from a reaping hook, and thus disfigured, it frequently embarrassed the fingering.

The young men, as they entered, saluted the master, with hats off, but, except while each was receiving the lesson, he remained covered or uncovered as he pleased. If he laid his hat aside, he might have some difficulty in lighting on it again, so many changes occurred during the evening.

At first there was great staidness of behaviour, even on the part of those who were known as bucks, or regular frequenters of ale-houses and tents of fairs. The young girls were particularly silent and attentive to all Mr. Tench's motions and little speeches, as they sat with their silk or cotton handkerchiefs modestly covering neck and bosom, and their braided hair turned up at the back of the head, and kept in its place by the genuine or mock tortoise-shell comb. Some of the better-looking of the rustic beauties, favoured by this classic style of wearing the hair, had something of the air of Calypso, or Penelope, or Andromache, or other Heathen lady or goddess, as we find

them in picture and statue. It may be a prejudice of early impressions that we still prefer the bodkin or the comb to the chenille net. Irish women ought to sympathise with us in this respect. The lady who traversed Munster unmolested in the days of King Brian, was habited as Andromeda before her exposure on the rock.

Before the commencement of the lessons the professor would occasionally make a little speech—he was partial to the sound of his own voice on such occasions—and it generally took some such form as the following:—"Now, leedies and gentlemen, I expect the greatest attention to these lessons, which, I must tell you, you are fortunate in getting. I suppose you all admired, more than once, how gracefully the gentlemen of Castleboro' and Mr. Blacker walk and bow, and how they do be at their ease, while the likes of you would not know which leg to stand on, or how to keep your hands easy when they are speaking to yous. Well, what's the reason? They were *learned* to mind their positions, and hold themselves in genteel attitudes, and dance when they were young. And see the way the world goes. A gandher of a city professor will get his guinea, where I, that might learn them conceited scoggins both steps and deportment, is hard set to make a thirteen. Mr. Breen, if you can't keep your hands out of your breeches-pocket, saving the leedies' presence, we must get a pair of bags made for them." (General titter and laughter.) "So, as I was animadverting, pay attention to these nine lessons, and you will be inculcated to stand before Mr. Carew or Mr. Blacker, or any mister, or lord, or juke of the land, with aise, air, and modesty, and needn't be scratching your head, nor shuffling your feet, nor keep fiddling with your fingers. And when we have the May-boys, or the *Rinka Fadha*, or the harvest home at the castle, and when the young Masther pays Miss Mary Curran there, or Miss Peggy Neil, or any other of the leedies present, the honour of being her partner in 'Tatther Jack Walsh,' or the 'Humours of Ballycarney,' or any of the honourable leedies, his sisters, does Mr. Brian Roche or Mr. Mick Fitcharris (*c* for *z*) the felicity of touching his rough paw with her silky fingers, you won't feel as if you wished

to drop asunder, or sink a mile or two down through the flags. No; pay the most *pucksitious* attention to my instruction, and you will feel as easy and contemplatious when you're running country dances, or going through *petticoatees* and *coatylongs* with the Quality, as if it was the next neighbour's child you had for your partner. Now, Miss Oonah Quigly, will you please to stand up there fornenst me till we begin to get through our evening's work. You have only one night or so in the week, and it's only a relaxation and holiday's amusement to you, while I'm five nights working away, and talking, and putting stupid legs through their facings, and all for thirteen pence a quarter. The other day I was passing Tottenham Green—yous all heard of 'Tottenham in his boots'—and the squire was at the gate, ruralising with Mr. Lee, of Rosegarland, and he stopped myself to have a noration with me for a long half hour; and when I was walking away, after saluting the gentlemen in my highest style—'There, Lee,' says he;—wasn't it odd that he only called him short by his name, while he addressed me in full length by the appellation of Mister Tench? 'Lee,' says he, 'it's seldom we perceive merit appreciated. There ought to be a statute of *brazen*;' brazen, I think, is what he said. I know it wasn't brass—'a brazen statute,' says he, 'raised to that genteel man in the Maudlin of Ross, or the Bull-Ring of Wexford, or the Market House of Enniscorthy.' Any how, self-praise is no commendation. Miss Oonah, please stand diagonally in that corner, with expanded breast. You may let your purty left arm lie this way across your handkerchief, and your right palm cover the back of your left hand. Now look at me, and never mind whether the fongs of your pumps be loose or not. First position. Stand with your feet at an angle of eighty or ninety degrees." Oonah's eyes opened wide at this. "Never mind; fluxions isn't learned in country schools for a good reason the masters have. This is what I want"—action suited to the word. Oonah essayed the pose, but persisted in keeping her head bent, in order to judge of her success. "Heads up, and as you were, Miss Oonah. That will do. Be as much at your aise as if you were looking at the hens

and turkey-cocks meandering on the dunghill at home. Position No. 2. Throw out right foot, point toe, right heel to middle of left foot—so. Ah, your right foot is next the door." "Master, I put the same foot as yourself." "Miss Oonah, the next time you look at your comely face in the glass, the right eye in the mirror will be opposite the left one in your head. *Thigin Thu* (do you understand)?" Every one laughed except Oonah's sweetheart and brother.

The standing positions being got through well or ill, Mr. Tench next proceeded to instruct his pupil in the moving ones. Oonah holding herself in the second position, he pronounced in a loud, abrupt fashion, "*Puzze*," (Poussez?) and thereupon, commencing with the right foot, she marched two steps in that direction. On his pronouncing "*Puzzet*" (Poussette), she brought her feet into the position for a *curtchy*, and made it accordingly. "*Lepuzzet*" (Repoussette?) was the next order, on which she made one step backwards in the direction of her original position, and repeated the courtesy, and so the mere standing and walking operations were over.

All this was very plain sailing indeed, compared with the acquisition of the steps, of which there were about six or seven varieties, including cover the buckle, heel and toe, the side step, the pushing step, upset and curl (spring and flourish). In one, the mastery consisted in standing on the toes, and bringing alternately the sole of one foot over the instep of the other in the quickest possible time. In another the fronts of the insteps were rapidly brought into contact with the backs of the legs. In the ordinary forward movement the front soles at a greater or less angle with each other, vigorously passed over the ground, the right coming immediately after and under the left one for some distance, and then taking the lead, and the peculiar twist of the body undergoing a change at the same time.

The favourite "step" in hornpipes consisted of a vigorous high shove of the foot in the air, a heavy slap on the floor, followed by three insignificant double beats, and then the passing over the duty to the other foot. Then the side steps similar to the chassées in quadrilles must not be for-

gotten, in which, while the feet shuffled to the right, the body swayed to the left. The forward step and the sets to partners in modern quadrilles were not known in their present slow style, nor would they have been practicable in the rapid movements of our rustic performers.

Girls and boys learned the same steps, the only difference in practice consisting of the shorter and less lofty character of the steps when practised by the women-kind. The sole of the girl's slipper was never removed beyond three inches from the floor, while her partner, by way of variety, would give an occasional kick as high as his shoulder.

Shamus's repertory embraced in perfection only two tunes of rather vulgar titles. It could not be expected that in any genteel assembly a lady could hear her cavalier call for *Cabbage and Pork*, or *Laugh and be Fat*, and outlive the indignity. These were, indeed, all that he could play with satisfaction to the feet of his patrons. But he was helpless, and well known, and there could be no assembly without the presence of three or four young fellows, who, though unable to extract any information from a written or printed stave of music, were capable of playing with effect all the dance-tunes known in the country. The general rule was, that poor Shamus's music, becoming intolerable after the first half hour or so, Darby Browne, or Mogue Ryan, or Watt Doyle of the Wood, or Michael Dunne, or one of the thirteen Blanches, would voluntarily relieve poor Bowes, and he himself be relieved in turn by another amateur.

Now we proceed to the application of the steps to simple figures. The fiddler playing his best known air, and the pupil standing as far as the clear space allowed from the master, danced forward till they nearly met, the scholar making use of the steps lately learned. He then returned to his place with backward steps, still facing the teacher, and repeated the operation a couple of times. Then Mr. Tench cried out, "Variate," and he proceeded to exhibit steps different from those he had just danced. He then chasséed to right and left, "Capé" being the direction given by the teacher, to whom his science had come in the mode fashionable among the Druids.

The time devoted to getting through this programme depended on the number of pupils to be taught in the course of the evening. If the number was comparatively large there were but few repetitions, and the pupils were directed to practise hard before the next gathering. And now the reward awaiting on docile and active youths and maids was at hand. Mr. Tench, selecting the damsel he delighted to honour, led her out on the floor, and presented a favoured youth as her companion in a jig.

So Martin, getting right heel into the hollow of left foot, and failing two or three times, at last succeeded in doing the right thing, in so far as holding his hat not very ungracefully in his right hand, and applying his left palm to the middle button of his waistcoat, and making a nondescript bow. Nancy did not find it altogether so difficult to lay the palm of her right hand on the back of her left, which rested upon her plaid silk kerchief, and, drawing back her right foot, make a respectable curtsey. The next operation required some ingenuity and exercise, to please the not-easily-pleased Mr. Tench. The lady's arm forming a certain oblique angle from shoulder to knuckles (the vertex being the elbow joint), and the fingers again projecting in the line of grace from the same knuckles, were extended gracefully, and somewhat inclining to the left, the palm looking towards the floor, and Martin with head and body bent, and right leg extended, applied his palm to hers; and now no earthly obstacle intervened between the happy pair, and the most exhilarating of all harmless exercises, the execution of an Irish jig.

Shamus's *locum-tenens* struck up a jig air, and Martin and Nancy, hand-in-hand, his right grasping her left, footed the four sides of the square area—say in the directions north, west, south, east—till they were again on the spot from which they had started; then, without pause, they made a circuit in a contrary direction. On again arriving at the point of departure, they proceeded down the centre to near the farther side, and there balancéed to each other; then Martin, taking Nancy's left hand in his right, they made a revolution, and with a change of hands, another revolution in an opposite sense; then taking both

hands, mutually clasped, they made a final whirl. Martin now, to adopt the recondite meaning of the ballet, finding his admiration of his partner diminish, or his suspicion of her truth increase, retired backward, his face expressive of regret, as who should say, "And is she then false to her vows?" Having got as far from her as the assembly or the wall permitted, and seeing her preparing to pursue him, and so reclaim his lost affection, he gallantly and considerately advanced to meet her half-way. Neither being satisfied with the expression of the other's face on coming close, they mutually retreated. Another attack of tender remorse brought them once more together, to meet with renewed disappointment. Grown wiser this time, as soon as they had reached their respective positions, they *variated*, and then chasséed (*capéd* in the master's phraseology) right and left, to give themselves time each to carefully contemplate the state of the inward feelings portrayed on the countenance of the dear being opposite. The result being satisfactory, they advanced once more; but experience having introduced some caution, they balancéed for a few moments—how appropriate the expression!—before committing themselves, and even then there was some cautious experimenting. With right hands—those farthest from the heart—they made a cautious twirl. Confidence having increased, the hands nearest the seat of affection grasped each other, and in the revolution then and there made in an opposite direction, the initiated might see the coming betrothal foreshadowed. Making the final round in Hymen's name, with the four hands firmly clasped, while Mr. Tench, representing the Flamen of that purple-hued god, pronounced the mystic word "Rigadoon," by way of blessing, they faced him, side by side, and greeted him lowly. As in the theatre, the lovers just made happy, and fronting the audience, hand-in-hand, go their separate ways with the utmost coolness as soon as the curtain descends; so Martin and Nancy saw no more of each other, *i.e.*, exchanged not a word after he had conducted her to her seat of straw-covered ladder-rungs. During the rapid exercise Nancy occasionally clapped one hand on her well-developed hip, a circumstance which Tench was obliged to

tolerate, his instructions being that the arms should hang gracefully by the side. He entirely discouraged the flinging of these limbs about, or flourishing them on a level with the head. He had occasion to check Martin more than once for such transgressions.

Another pair were called out, and the same process was repeated. For the sake of readers ignorant of the social aspect of country life half a century since, we supply the names of some of these breath-taking jigs, which required a fine ear and great exertion in the very rapid movements of the limbs to correspond with the short, quick time to which the tunes were played. We regret that they were not favoured with names somewhat more euphonious.

"Off she goes," "Follow me up to Carlow," "Rock Road," "Miners of Wicklow," "Tipsy House," "Humours of Glynn," "Jig Polthogue," "Cumulum," "Bury my Wife, and dance on the top of her," "Moll in the Wad," and Shamus's two standard tunes already named.

Dancing four-hand reels was the next exercise in the order of the evening. The successful performances in the mad jig dances were more admired, and received more applause, not by clapping of hands or stamping of feet—modes of approbation unknown in Tomanearly, or Tinnock, or Forrestalstown, but by pleased murmurs, or shouts of "Hurroo for Nancy!" or "Hurroo for Martin!" But the reel admitting of two additional performers had more of a comfortable domestic spirit about it.

Two young men and their partners stood in a circle holding hands, and at the conclusion of Shamus's prelude footed it round till they were again in their original places. At the first bar of the second part away they went again in an opposite direction. Then the men, joining their right hands in the centre, and the women imitating them, another revolution was made, followed by one contrariwise, the left hands being connected. The next move was a change of places between the men and a return to the old ground, accompanied by a corresponding movement on the part of the women. This cross-fire had a very good effect when neatly executed. They then passed round, giving right hand to first person met, left hand to second, &c.,

till after describing two circles, they arrived at home again. Each man now facing his partner, went through the regular advances, retreats, *variates*, side-steps, sets to, &c., till the "hooking" impulse set them at work in that direction. They varied this exercise by the men taking right hands in the middle, and changing places, and then giving left hands, and recovering their own ground. They then looked on while the women executed a similar manœuvre. The finale was the taking of hands, and bowing or curtsying to opposite partners, and then the forming of a line, and saluting the dancing-master.

Every individual in the group, sensible of being under the eyes of his three fellow-labourers, as well as those of the surrounding crowd, exerted him or herself to the utmost to execute the steps, and go through the figures in good style. Animal magnetism also did its office in exciting spirit, and emulation, and gaiety, and all were momentarily sorry when the reel was over. Let not the frequenters of more refined reunions wonder if we suspect that the enjoyment of a reel by its four performers, face to face, and sympathizing with each other, exceeds very considerably that of my Lord Dundreary and his partner listlessly walking a quadrille.

A reel-of-three was gone through, something in the style of a jig, but to slower time, one performer standing inactive in the rear, and displacing the one immediately before him at the proper time. At points in the dance the three were engaged in performing evolutions which they were pleased to call the figure of 8.

These are the names of some of the tunes to which reels were crossed and rounded :—"The Breeze that shakes the Barley," "Humours of Ballycarney," "Miss Johnson's Reel," "Miss M'Leod," "What the Devil ails you," "Bang it up," "Over the bridge to Peggy," "Humours of Inistioge," "Devil's Dream," "The Ship full rigged," "The Soldier's Joy."

In many cases the owner of the barn, objecting to his daughters being taught steps and deportment before so many witnesses, would have Mr. Tench and his minstrel during the day to instruct them, and perhaps the children

of some intimate neighbour. In the evening they might be allowed to act the part of spectators for some limited time, and perhaps join in a reel when the lessons came to an end.

Some stripling, from fourteen to seventeen, would be sure to enter the hall of dancing on sufferance. His parents would not throw away 1*s.* 7½*d.* Irish on having him *learned* that useless and nonsensical exercise. It would be fitter for him to mind his "Euclid," or his "Jackson's Book-keeping." "And be this stick in my hand" (*mater loquitur*), "if you ax your father or me again for dance-money, I'll go every step o' the road to Clochbawn school, and ax your master if he has nothing to do for you. Dance, indeed! will Mr. Sparrow, of Inniscorfy ax you, when your father takes you into town to be a clerk under him, if you wor larned to cover the buckle or cut heel and toe? Dance, indeed! Divel dance the first Geochach that ever found it out!"

Our friend Charley when a boy did not succeed in persuading his parents to get him taught: so he was obliged to content himself with the lot of a spectator under difficulties. Such a *gorsoon* could not get a position next the area left for the performance; so occasionally he got glimpses from the unsteady "shass-top" or between the sides or the legs of the favoured young men; and it is a fact that some of the best dancers in the baronies of Bantry, Scarawalsh, and Shelmalier had picked up the art in this uncomfortable manner.

It happened one day, that he was minding his mother's cows in a field partially sown with corn, and the daughter of Bill Doyle, a near neighbour, was at a similar employment in the next field, and nothing but a furze-covered *ditch* between them.

"Ah, then, Charley, would you just come over the ditch, and tache us a few of them steps you saw at Paddy Devereux's last night?"

"Faith, an' I wont. If my mother or father found me out of the field, maybe I wouldn't get a throuncing. You may cross the fence if you like."

"An' sure I'm as much in dhread of my father as yourself."

"Well, but you want to learn, and I don't."

"That's true; but I'd be terribly afeard."

We do not want to puff our friend, but he certainly did not press the matter, and yet Nelly came over.

There they were; he teaching and she learning, with eyes and feet, all the intricacies of steps and figures, when the terrible sight of her father's face over the fence, and the terrible sound of his angry voice, shook her whole frame with terror. Coming into the field, he had found the cattle in the middle of the green corn; and having driven them back to their pasture, he neared the fence, and found his own child and his neighbour's child chasséing and poussetting as eagerly as if Shamus was playing, Tench instructing, and a sympathising crowd thundering their plaudits. With a good twig in hand, and good will in heart, Bill began to *lay thousands* on his truant daughter, heedless of her cries and her dancing-master's entreaties. However, the "god in the machine" came on the ground in the shape of Charley's father.

"Bill, you terrible tinker," said he, "have you a mind to kill the little girl?"

"No, neighbour, I have not," was the reply. "I'm only sthrivin' to do for her what you ought to do for Ned—that is to bring her to a pitch of modesty."

Poor Nelly got off for the moment with the stripes already inflicted; but, as Charley assured us, she sought no more contraband lessons in dancing.

Tench having bestowed on the primary instruction of his pupils all the cares considered necessary for one night, miscellaneous reel dances were commenced by the company —pupils or not. It was preceded by the interesting ceremony of making a collection for the fiddler. The collector was Mr. Tench, who, in the dress already described, plus enormous ribbons in his turn-pumps, and minus the eel or seal-skin cap now in use as a money-bag, made a very searching tour through the assembly. The most distinct image of that glorious time of youth that has remained with us is the bending body of the professor, with the cap

held by the peak in both hands, the set mouth, the peaked chin, the sharp eyebrows and cheek-bones, the hard look of the eye in its dark cavity, and the eager, intent expression of the whole face, raised to one of the tall young fellows of the company. This, seen by the large shadow-throwing light of one of the candles, somewhat higher than the man himself, remained in our memory as if engraved on iron.

The professor knew, to a great extent, the science of cajolery; and many and varied engines were brought to bear on the enemy's pockets to extract the penny, no more being generally expected from any one.

"Come, now, show your sperit before the ladies. You wont miss a penny from the lob you've got for your corn the last market-day. It is not a small penny your fine Inch by the Boro brings you in every year. Don't have the fiddler's curse on you for a penny. No young girl admires a close-fisted bachelor. Come, girls, your egg and fowl-money will get rusty in your pockets. Don't let ribbons and plaids swally it all."

The reels now performed were done in better style than those described, as they fell to practised hands and feet; and this was the accompanying etiquette. Two young men, presenting themselves before the young women of their predilection, made their best bows, and handed them out on the floor. There was no such thing fashionable among our vigorous-natured boys and girls as engagements for third or thirteenth set, and seldom a refusal given to an application. This reel having concluded, the young men sat down, or stood by, and the young women, dropping curtsies to two other cavaliers, reel No. 2 was executed. And thus the dances succeeded each other, the elect of every dance being the electors in the succeeding one, and the fiddler receiving the salutation addressed to the master in the beginning of the evening.

This portion of the entertainment was always a period of great enjoyment, but was succeeded by an exercise of greater excitement still, originally invented by a fiddler fond of pennies, and acquainted with the results of rival feelings, either in game-cocks or in young country fellows,

when they feel the eyes of their sweethearts resting on them.

The two male performers in possession of the floor, when selecting partners for the first reel under the new system, threw two halfpence into the fiddler's hat, carried round by Tench, or a substitute; and one of them shouting out, "Hurroo for Coolbawn!" if that was his own residence or his sweetheart's, away went the lively reel. It was not allowed to go on very long when another aspirant, pitching his halfpenny into the treasury, cried "Stop the music." The strains became dull as by magic, and continued so till they were awakened by the dropping of another halfpenny into the hat, and a cry raised by one of the two new men, perhaps for the girls of Knockmore, or Dranagh, or Gurrawn.

It was the privilege of the men to call for their favourite tune at the commencement of the reel, and their choice was consequent on a whispered consultation with their partners. They danced with the more vigour and enjoyment as they did not know the moment when a boy from Cnoc-na-Gour would take it into his head to exalt the belle or belles of that locality, and, by dropping a halfpenny into the hat, stop the music and the enjoyment of the present party at once.

Jobbing, that unpleasant ingredient in all human transactions, was not absent from our mirthful gatherings. When the fiddler found the cries for arresting the music waxing weak, a young fellow, furnished with money for the purpose, would make the necessary motion, and, with a "Stop music," and hurroo for Clonroche, or Coolroe, and the sky over it, induce a slight rush in the shower of copper.

During this part of the evening's business there was considerable commotion and bustle, similar—in a milder and healthier state—to what is felt at a horse-race, or a boxing-match. The rival youths may be supposed anxious not to lose ground in the estimation of their loves; townlands felt right jealous of their neighbours' eminence; and the girls hurrooed for in connection with this or that village or townland, deeply sympathised with the young men who championed these localities. The assistants at

the absorbing sport were scarcely less excited than the performers. They were in the same category as the betters on a favourite horse at Ballyheoge race-ground.

This did, perhaps once in seven years, lead to a fight, but we can recall no instance. Our inquiries on the subject have met with such answers as these:—

"I believe Pat Behan and Jem Kehoe had some words at the fair of Moneyhore, about what happened at the dance at Moneytucker."

"Yes, indeed. I heard that John Henrick and Bill Clere boxed it out in the rath of Tinnock, about purty Kate Murphy, that refused John, and then danced with Bill, in Pedher Mor's barn," etc., etc.

At last the strife of the townlands, and the girls whose homes lay there, was over, and hornpipes—single, double, and triple—began to rule. Sometimes a door was taken off its hinges and laid down on the middle of the floor, and there the performer exhibited his strength and agility. First, however, he "circumnavigated" the floor twice, in opposite directions, and then with arms crossed, or poised, or whirled as he pleased, he went through his stock performances, of which we give some of the names—the triple hornpipes being slower in movement than the double, and those again slower than the single.

Single.—"The Leg of Mutton," "Kate and Davy," "Garran Bui."

Double.—"Planxty Carroll," "Shan Bui," "Little House under the Hill," "Tatter Jack Walsh," "Haste to the Wedding," "Trip to the Cottage," "Unfortunate Rake," "Paddy O'Carroll."

Triple.—"Flowers of Edinboro'," "Cuckoo's Nest," "Spenser's Hornpipe," and "First of May." "Moll Roe," "Miners of Wicklow," "Larry Grogan," "Shan Bui," and "Donnybrook Fair," were of a miscellaneous character.

The young men who executed these hornpipes were generally selected by Mr. Tench from among his best ex-pupils. They served the purpose of desirable models to those under training, and raised ambition in the breasts of those whose courage had not reached the point of sacrificing nineteen pence halfpenny, Irish, on the altar of

renown. Popular dancers, even though untrained by the master, would at times be called forward and obliged to perform, willingly enough for the most part. Tench, however politely he might act on such occasions, did not like this arrangement, but he knew that opposition would be useless and tend to make him unpopular.

Very great and eager was the excitement produced among the spectators by these exhibitions of individual skill and strength. Besides the natural sympathy roused in the nervous system of every spectator, not thoroughly callous or indifferent, on witnessing rapid and harmonious motions, every one had his own little world of *fautorers*—townsfolk, relatives, or perhaps a lover, whose muscles thrilled to every bound, and spring, and rapid beat, and flourish he executed. All this was fully evident to the dancer, either in the low murmur or loud "Hurroo for Pat Martin!" or the social electricity with which the atmosphere of the room was charged, and added suppleness and vigour to his much-tasked powers. A feeling of absolute fatigue, and the sense of what was due to the other high scholars in art were his warning to desist. The acme of perfection in this exercise was the bearing of a pot of beer in the right hand, unspilled, during the performance.

Those who wish to look on the mere ludicrous features of rustic dance-academies may be safely referred to Carleton's inimitable sketch of *Mr. Buckram Back*, and his instructions in politeness, and the contention of his pupils with those of a rival establishment; and how one party, being greatly assisted by a certain post in correctly executing their figures, the other party, taking a shabby advantage of them, got it removed; and how the absence of this trusty finger-post threw confusion and unsteadiness among their ranks, even to the loss of the great trial match. Unhappily, nothing of the kind took place in our neighbourhood. The Carrolls of the Duffrey would not cross the Dranagh stream in a S.W., nor Tench in a N.E. direction, nor ever meet at fair or pattern; but it was not so with their pupils. When the gathering was within a reasonable distance at each side of the boundary—say Knockmore, or Clochayden, or Kaim, or Mangan—some dancers in repute from

the other side of the stream would be present, and at the hornpipe hour would be politely invited to mount table or unhinged door. No discouragement whatever would be experienced by the foreigners. If an artist used one leg only in certain steps, and did not *variate* by the indifferent use of both, he might hear some ungracious murmurs—that was all. When once the performances were over, and the parties returning home, probably by the light of *fangles*, the most unreserved criticism felt itself at full liberty to exercise its rights.

At last it began to be felt that quite enough of the floor and of the evening had been given up to the young men, and by general acclamation, *petticoatees* and *coatylongs* (cotillons) were introduced, and walked and postured through to the air of the "Jackson Family," &c., &c., &c. Probably the farmer's wife, and a near neighbour or two, and their husbands, were the earliest performers in these old-fashioned measures. They were the ghosts of the courtly minuets, and did impose a trifle of awe on the young girls and boys by the slow movements, the bows and curtsies, the holding out of the petticoats or gowns, so as to make them present the hooped articles of last century, the formal touching of hands, and the haughty turning away. All this would have answered the men's tired state, but the girls soon wearied of the constrained motions and the general slowness of the business, and gave their entire assent to the formation of the two rows of boys and girls indispensable to the country-dance.

The spirited couples had little room, were obliged to mind their steps and figures, were sure of being railed at if they committed blunders, and, besides, tedium has little power in a crowd not too crowded, when music is giving forth its harmony, and this harmony is given back by sprightly clattering of feet. Besides, if the row was rather long, the pair left at the head would start off when their leaders were one-third or one-half down the line; and thus the music would inspire the legs, and arms, and heads of a couple of loving quaternions at once. Country-dances were suitable as a closing to the labour and relaxation of

the night, as they afforded an opportunity for several couples being on the floor at the same time.

Of course, the evergreen Roger de Coverley was played for some one or other of the country-dances. All could be danced to any of the reel or hornpipe tunes already mentioned, including the "Basket of Oysters," "Donnybrook Fair," and though perhaps there was not a second Protestant boy or girl in the room, "Protestant Boys" and the "Boyne Water."

There was a variety in the figure when the last fine air was played. At the turn of the music the lively slip-jig of "Cumulum" was struck up, and the man danced down to the last woman in the row, set to her, "hooked" her, and dashed back again. Then his partner flew to the last man, paid him her respects in the same way, and flew back. The grave air being then resumed, they began to engage the next pair, and at the first bar of the jig, were off to dance with the lowest pair but one.

But, like all other earthly things, the dance at Tomanearly came to an end. The young women who did not live in the village were escorted home by relatives, among whom it is not to be wondered at that sweethearts occasionally mixed. If the night was dark the fangle was lighted, and after many "good nights" and allusions to the next merry meeting, the barn was deserted, and the candles carefully extinguished. The family, on returning to the big kitchen, sat for a while at the fire, to talk over the various little incidents of the night. Mr. Tench was complimented on the progress of his pupils, and treated to a tumbler of punch, a delicacy loved by him and by Mrs. Tench, who accompanied him in his wanderings, and helped him to melt his money in the whisky crucible.

But it is time to return to our friends at Mr. O'Brien's.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DEATHS AND MARRIAGES.

STRANGE to say, when the dance came to an end, and order was restored, the discourse fell on the subject of Poor Shan

Raguireen's death and wake, and some were horrified at hearing that the poor creature, when he felt getting very ill, endeavoured to swallow some of his well-preserved guineas. "God preserve us from covetousness," added Mrs. Roche, who related the incident.

Edward.—Amen, and from every kind of vice. I shall never forget a wake I attended once near Ross. I was on a visit with our relations near Corbet-hill, and was slightly acquainted in that neighbourhood with a respectable family in humble circumstances: it consisted of father, mother, and daughter. I was never in their house for five minutes without hearing of the young man who was in Newfoundland, and would be sending home quintals of dried fish, and goodness knows what besides, next fall; and come home himself some day with a load of money; and keep the old couple snug and comfortable; and give his sister a pretty little fortune when her turn came to be married. I soon knew every turn of his character, his stout figure and high-coloured face, his jollity, and his loud hearty voice, and would be glad to see himself in person when he found it convenient to return.

"I left the little family one evening after we had chatted very pleasantly for a couple of hours; and judge of my alarm next morning to see the young girl in a state of distraction, screeching and wringing her hands. I was requested to give my services by going to town, and getting home a coffin and other funeral requisites; and that evening when I paid a sorrowful visit at their cabin, there on the bed were stretched the remains of their pride and hope. I shall never forget the lamentable shrieks of the mother and daughter, as they hung over the body, and slapped the bed in their utter misery. I was so bewildered and excited by the terrible spectacle, that I felt at times as if the intensity of their passionate outcries was enough to recall the spirit back to the lifeless corpse of the poor boy.

"I afterwards learned the circumstances of his death. When the season for fishing was over, he engaged with a captain of a vessel who was coming on a voyage to Ireland. I fear that he was not so good natured or saving as his

family supposed: at all events, the ship anchored in Waterford harbour without any effort on his part to come see his family, or let them know he was so near home. Young people cooped up in a ship naturally wish at times for relaxation or excitement of some kind; so the little crew had an entertainment one evening on board, and there was drinking, and dancing, and all sorts of amusement, and in the middle of the jollity the young truant fell overboard, and was taken up some time after, lifeless. May we be preserved from a sudden and unprovided death!

Mr. Roche.—Amen. Surely they are well off that are called away while they are young and innocent. It reminds me how God was pleased to visit your own family in his mercy. I believe it will be four years past next Easter.

Edward.—It will be a warning to me while I live not to calculate too surely on any expected enjoyment. I was at the time with those relatives near Ross; and some of my young cousins and myself were on the point of starting for the town on Easter Monday morning. We were standing at the door just ready for the road, enjoying the fine sunny fresh atmosphere, when I saw James Breen come into the yard. I guessed in a moment that he was the bearer of some sorrowful news, and so it proved. He told me all the particulars as they fell out the day before: how poor little Peggy and her young companions were in such glee, running with their Easter eggs to lock themselves up in a room at Daniel Foley's and hold their feast; and how, just as they were going carelessly behind one of the horses, as he was eating his chopped furze at the stone trough, he threw out his legs, struck the poor little creature behind the ear with his iron shoe; and till God was pleased to release her from her sufferings, she never opened her mouth nor her eyes again. Ah! what a journey home I had, instead of the pleasure-jaunt I was expecting, and what a sorrowful sight to see the dear pale features fixed in death, and the mark of the blow on her innocent little head. Many and many a time since have I suffered from remorse squeezing my heart like a stitch, when I recollect many instances of neglect and unkindness on my own part to her while we were together.

Mrs. O'Brien's tears had been silently trickling for some time, and Theresa's head was turned away; so Edward ceased to speak, and Mr. Roche, in order to relieve the feeling of sadness that had seized on his neighbours, said, "I am sure that though the sudden death of the poor child was a severe trial, it must now be a cause of great comfort to you all that her salvation is secured. It was only a short time before that she had made her first communion; and her earnest childish piety was remarked by every one that knew her. Father Prendergast, who saw her during her last moments, declared that, through God's good mercy, he was morally certain of her salvation. With every day that passes over your head, Mrs. O'Brien, your satisfaction will increase, feeling that your child is now a happy spirit in heaven, instead of enduring the trials and sorrows of life; and looking down with pity on you, and me, and all of us, and raising her prayers to the throne of mercy for our perseverance in God's way."

H. W.—I suppose, Mr. Roche, that every one must endure trials and hardships, but some few, I think, are exempt from all but very trifling ones. A relative of mine had a husband who suffered as little through life as any person in the world. His wife and daughters were lively, industrious people; and my friend had merely some ordinary duties to perform, but was apparently under no responsibility. He scarcely interfered in domestic government, and at last took to his bed through mere failure of his bodily powers. His was the only departure I ever witnessed, and there was very little that was painful about it. His mind began to go aside from its ordinary quiet and prayerful state, but even then the innocent and devout tenor of his past life was evident. He began playing with the flowers on the quilt, as if they were real ones, and spoke to angels who were, as he fancied, looking at him between the curtains; and opened and closed his hands on lambs that were frisking over the meadow into which his quilt was changed."

Few of our country gatherings would be satified to treat long on such a serious subject as that which was then occupying our company. The discourse changed to court-

ships and weddings, and H. W. related with much glee the breaking off of a match in the family of his Coolcul relatives. Previous to his narrative being heard, a few words on the ceremony of match-making in former days in our country may not be inappropriate. However farmers' sons and farmers' daughters might converse, and pay and receive compliments, going to or coming from Mass, or market, or fair, it was seldom on a young woman that lived in the same townland that his family and he had fixed their thoughts for marriage. This might arise, in some measure, from the relationship, more or less close, that linked neighbouring families. For instance, in the wide extent of land called Forestal's Town, there was scarce a human being but an O'Leary; in Rathnure every family was a Forestal. If an ill-starred pair of cousins loved each other, their course of true love would be crossed, but the number of ricketty, feeble, or idiotic children was very small.

Well, the old farmer and his wife wished to add a few acres to their farm, or to get help to clear off an arrear, or to portion Miss Bridget, who was marriageable; or young John had accidently seen a young damsel, who lived ten or fifteen miles away, at the market or fair of Ross, or Enniscorthy, or Moghurry, or perhaps at a funeral; or Murtha *Cowman*, the male match-maker, or Biddy Goodwin, female ditto, had sung the charms, the industry, the good character, and the *dowry* (that in particular) of the maid of Tombrack, or Ballynocrish, or Kaimtigue, and it was resolved that *Shan Oge* should bring this paragon home as his honoured bride. In the first place, some common friend would be seized on to introduce the wooer, or, in other words, act as his "blackman;" and oftentimes the cleverness of the blackman was as important in the eyes of the family of the young aspirant as the good looks and *personable* appearance and ingratiating manners of the amorous pretender himself.

This indispensable personage, on hearing his friend's wishes, took care, and with as little delay as possible, to sound the young damsel's family, and incidentally, the young damsel herself; and if any pre-engagement existed,

to which the family sanction had been given, Shan Oge and his family were apprized, and the thing dropped.

But if no obstacle intervened, there was every probability that young Catherine, and her father and brother—even her mother—might be present next Thursday at Enniscorthy market, and young John and his family would be not far from the market-house, and the common friend would be there on some business of his own to be sure; and, joining himself to the bridegroom's party, they would, in walking down Market-street, or up Back-lane, or down Church-street, meet "promiscuously" their future relations. Then would introductions take place—not in the form, however, in use in Merrion-square.

"Good morrow, Mr. Brennan! Little I thought of meeting yourself and family in Enniscorthy to-day. This is Mr. Kavanagh from Kaim, and his son John, great friends of mine. I won't be sorry for yous to know one another. I hope, Catherine, you don't paint. If you do, don't tell my daughters where you buy that fine red you have on your cheeks, or they'll break me. Be the laws its a warm day, so it is; and just as we met you, we wor thinking it wouldn't be a bad thing to go in and look at some one quenching their thirst," &c., &c., &c.

Were we to enter the comfortable little tavern in Back-lane in about an hour, we should be greeted by a strong odour of lemoned punch or mulled beer, and find the blackman and the seniors at one table, talking and drinking, and no one any way particular about using a separate tumbler; and probably Catherine and John at another table, he doing his best to make himself agreeable, and prevail on her to take a glass of punch, or to take a sip out of his tumbler, so that it might be sweetened for him. If she can be prevailed on so far, he immediately applies his lips to the part of the glass touched by hers, and considerable progress is made. Meanwhile a friendly spirit hovers over the other table, and many are the *Shudhurths* and *Dhialaths* that are uttered, and many times are hands grasped across the table. In most cases all that is attempted at this *chance*-meeting is the establishment of a good understanding between the families, and the commencement of

a liking on the part of the young people. And as there is no one by, of whose tongue Catherine is in awe when their backs are turned, she puts no unnecessary scorn in her face, and takes all John's efforts to make himself agreeable in good part. He has on a very clean shirt, and his cravat of silk does no wrong to his healthy countenance; his waistcoat showing a narrow breadth of silk, his broadcloth coat with bright buttons, his breeches and top-boots, look well in the eyes of Catherine, who has read no modern novel, nor even seen a print of Paris fashions. On the other hand, her bonnet with gay ribbons, the fresh-coloured silk-plaid handkerchief, covering her neck and bosom; her modest, but rich stuff-gown, and her silk-lined hood, all set off her agreeable face, marked with two or three freckles.

So, admitting that no serious affair of the heart has occurred on either side, considerable progress in good liking is made during the three hours of the symposium; at the end of which a strong maudlin tinge overspreads the affectionate feelings that prevail among the blackman's party; and as they separate in the early part of the evening, John and his friend are requested to pay a day or two's visit "to the ould place in Tombrack, next Saturday or Saturday week at farthest, and they'll find that all good feeling and friendship isn't left the county Wexford, nor the barony of Scarawalsh."

So in due course the visit is paid, and Catherine found where she could appear to advantage, superintending household matters, and bringing a pleasant atmosphere about her, whether making butter, milking her favourite cows, arranging the clean things for next morning's appearance at chapel, or busy about the state hot-cake and tea to treat the visitors. If there were no other young marriageable damsels in the house at the time, it was so much the better. When no critical eyes are on the watch, a young lady, or a young peasantess, will not fear to let the pleasure she takes in your society be apparent.

But while John is walking through the pastures with his intended, the blackman has been holding serious conferences with father and mother, explaining the extent

and condition of John's farm, and using all justifiable wiles to have the bride's dowry enlarged.

The custom of making expeditions into the county of Carlow to get wives and large fortunes was prevalent in the early part of this century in Wexford. The Wexfordian, fondly indulging the idea of his superiority to the Carlow folk, imagined that the bride would cheaply purchase with her gold her introduction into a more genteel society than she had been accustomed to. As the spendthrift young noble seeks to repair the breaches in his fortune by marrying the daughter of some city tradesman, even so the negligent and thriftless young farmer of the Duffrey or Bantry, being marked with an indifferent character in his own neighbourhood, would, with his blackman, take the pass of Scollagh or the village of Bunclody in his way; make a descent on the homestead of some snug farmer, and through assumption of high breeding, great acquaintances, and possession of a good farm, dazzle the young damsel and her parents, and bring her to a home much less comfortable than the one she had quitted.

Young John has got a "sonsy" careful wife, whom he loves, and who discharges her household duties with a will; but several matrimonial treaties never came to the country equivalent of signing or sealing. For, to their commendation or the reverse be it spoken, these high contracting parties rarely resorted to pen, ink, and paper to ratify their covenants. The bride brought so much money or stock to her new home; and, if she became a widow within a short period of her bridal, she returned, if she chose, to her own people, and her dowry went back with her. This was, however, an event of very rare occurrence. If life was spared, and things moved in their accustomed track, she became in time the supreme mistress of house and land, and ruled her household in honour and consideration, till the hour appointed to all of women born arrived.

In the instances quoted let not the reader suppose that the blackman had anything in common with the professional match-maker. The first was a mere unpaid, friendly agent; the second a hireling, whose sole occupation was to pass from one farm-house to another, and give notice in

one place of an heiress whose parents would be desirous of seeing her at the head of a fitting establishment; and in another, of a young handsome farmer that was on the look-out for "such a well-looking young girl as Miss Mary there, that was well brought up, and could bring about seventy or eighty pounds with her on the day of the *Hauling Home.*"

Success did not, in every instance, wait on courting expeditions: a melancholy instance to the contrary came to our own knowledge.

Among the matrimonial fasti of Bantry are preserved the untoward fortunes of the great Mr. Rush, who in the course of youth and middle age, had twelve times pushed his venturous steps into the county of Carlow across the intervening chain of mountains. The passes of Scollagh, and of Mam-a-Chuliagh, and that where the old Dallan Stone, called the Raimshach, stands, were all witnesses of his persevering courage. He deserved success, though he did not achieve it. Eleven brides he let slip through his fingers, rather than abate a single "thirteen" from the dower he knew he deserved; and was on the point of embracing the twelfth, when her niggardly father disgusted him by refusing to include a good quilted linsey-woolsey petticoat, on which he had staked his peace of mind. At the time of contesting this last prize he was turned of forty, and he came to the resolution of retiring from this social warfare. He certainly had a lonely life before him, but he felt that he was suffering for family honour, and a sound principle in the science of match-making.

The subject of match-making drawing to a close, H. W. related with glee (as before hinted) a disappointment once witnessed by himself.

This young hunter in the pursuit of knowledge had been sent by his parents, who abode in the neighbourhood of Blackstairs, to acquire an intimate knowledge of book-keeping from the great Martin Doyle of Shanowel, near Taghmon, and to abide during his studies with the relatives (before mentioned) who lived within two miles of the academy. He was enthralled by the dark eyes and dark

hair of one of his cousins, and tired his fellow-students with the charm which her black helmet-shaped velvet bonnet and black ostrich-feather had for him. She might have been twenty-five years old at the time, and he twelve. The school being so far from the old grange, coming home to dinner was out of the question; and the dark-haired cousin never neglected to provide her young admirer's pockets with a good wedge of home-made bread, and butter in proportion, as he stepped out in the morning for the distant school. In proportion to the greatness of his idolatry of Cousin Kate, was his dismay one evening on hearing that a big solemn prig of a "half-sir" of a farmer, from near the Oyl-Gate, had just arrived, attended by the needful blackman, and intent on carrying off his tutelary goddess. Great as was the infatuation of the young fellow, he was aware of the absurdity of thinking of his cousin as his future wife, but this did not avail to remove the annoyance he felt. He was supremely uncomfortable till next day, when he and another young cousin got into the room where the courtship was proceeding in the most formal and unpropitious style.

Kitty and her sister, and another young woman, were quilting, and eyes and hands were intently occupied on the strained piece, while the wooer and his blackman, most uncomfortable in their new clothes, were sitting near, and endeavouring to keep up a faint resemblance of conversation. The lady and her friends, not being expected to contribute much more to the entertainment than monosyllables, the gentlemen were taxed very tightly to prevent a dead silence from enveloping the company. The wooer was naturally of a taciturn disposition, and to the woebegone scholar it was some consolation to observe that the bride-elect gave him neither countenance nor help in sustaining the conversation, a slice of which is given from a somewhat treacherous memory.

"Were yez at the last races of Ballyheoge, ladies?" "Some of us were." "Well, did yez like it?" "Purty well." "Didn't the stands look mighty nice?" "Oh, very!" "And didn't the horses go like the wind?" "Oh, didn't they?" "But such a passion as some of the gentle-

men seemed in, and how they shouted when they were betting?" "We weren't near them." "But it is a hot, uncomfortable, dusty place, only for the tents." (A pause.) "Yez have a fine large bog here on your farm." "Yes, indeed. Is there much bogs near the Oyl Gate?" "No; but we *rise* a great deal of marl." "Oh, what use do you make of it?" "It is good for the sandy soil. I hear that Mr. M., your brother, wins prize cups at the races of Slevoy." "He does. Didn't you see them since you came?"

The blackman made some efforts to give a more gallant tone to the conversation, but he was not successful. The wooer was not satisfied with the dowry; the wooed felt no attraction towards him; things were unpropitious, and the conversation flagged. At last it was proposed that they should entertain themselves with a game of cards, and a game they began to play on the tightened quilt; the boys got a hint that their further attendance was not desirable, and they quitted the scene. Next day the young hero was executing all sorts of joyful antics after the departure of the unsuccessful candidate. He would read stories to her, give her lessons in large and small hand, and rejoice in her smiles for a twelvemonth to come.

We had not time to start a new subject, and were indulging in a fit of laughter on some pretence, when the unwelcome face of the master of the house, and of his worthy favourite, appeared in the doorway; and the surprised and surly expression on Mr. O'Brien's countenance was enough to extinguish all our comfort in a moment.

"Ah, my goodness!" said he, in a very vexed tone, which he intended to render cuttingly polite; "we must have lost a great deal of diversion, Sleeveen and myself. Oh, it's all very fine, if it could last; but still it was not exactly fair that some people should be out trudging seven or eight miles in cold and hunger, and some others indulging in all sorts of luxuries at the same time."

Mr. O'Brien's little drop of drink, after raising his spirits and sharpening his wits, had gradually turned traitor, and begun to aggravate his mental sores; and had now landed himself on the cross, fault-finding department

of its effects; or he certainly would not have let so much of the unamiable side of his disposition be seen. It is probable that a deserved rebuke would have come from some one in return for his ill-natured observations, but the word was suddenly taken by our old acquaintance, Pat Neil. Pat had enjoyed existence through the evening, like a king when his crown is off and his sceptre laid by. Still it was a mortification at times to hold his tongue; and now he rejoiced in the chance of a display; so he hastened to sympathize with the grievance of the master. "You are quite right, Mr. O'Brien," said he. "It is not them that deserves to be comfortable that are so. There was my father and myself last St. Martin's night sitting by the fire without a single bit of meat to kitchen our potatoes, while many a purse-proud bodagh and hoity-toity farmer's wife had lashings and leavings. 'What's to be done, father,' says I, 'to get over this disgrace?' 'How the dickens do I know?' says he. 'Then bleed the cat in honor of the night that's in it, Mr. Walker,' says I again. I called him 'Walker' for grandeur sake, though he has the same surname as myself, Neil: we are the ould blood. Indeed I need not think much about grandeur, for grand people often do little for us when their own turn is served.

"There was Squire Richards of Grange House, and Mr. Bruen of Enniscorthy Castle, that were one evening coming home from Wexford, and talking about the goodness of their horses. Mr. Bruen's horse was a great deal the best, but the other would not be outdone; and he proposed to run a steeple-chase again him across the country. Well, they overtook myself, and I getting along; and Mr. Richards kindly enough asked me how I was, and said how he was going to ride again Mr. Bruen. 'Mr. Richards,' says I, 'you'll not be vexed if I remind you, you were looking at some one drinking: you'll excuse the freedom; we're neighbours when we are at home. You're not in a condition for riding just now, and if you're thrown and kilt, all the neighbours will lay your death at my door. Get down, if you please, and throw me up in the saddle, and maybe I won't show Mr. Bruen some sport.' And now I won't say a word again Mr. Bruen. He is a humane man; he

often brings in Browzy, the bellman, into the grandest parlour of the castle, and there they drink hand to fist, till the cows come home in the morning. (Pat's authority on this and other points is not dependable.)

"Well, I must tell you that Mr. Bruen was not a bit glad when he saw me mounted on the squire's baste; but there was a good many people now *gother* together, and they said it was all fair. So up I got, and, 'Now, boys,' says I, 'stand wide and you'll see *divarsion*: follow me like a man, Mr. Bruen. So I clapped *steeds* to my horse, and galloped back like the wind to Ferry-Carrig: we were near Saunders' Court at the time. The people strove to keep up with us, and when we came near the bridge I turned to the right, and pushed straight to the bank of the river. 'Come on, Bruen, your sowl,' says I: 'here we go.' Clapping steeds to my horse again, I made him take a pring, held him up well by the head, and *ruz* him twenty perches over the Slaney. Just as we were straight over the middle, I found his *sthrenth* failing. 'Hay an' oats, your sowl,' says I to him, to give him courage, and I put my whip hand in a bag that hung under my left *oxther*, and gave him a capital feed. Well, my dears, he gave such a snort, that the bye-standers thought the sky was going to tumble down on their heads, and that there was fire coming out of his nostrils. So I gave him only a tap of the whip, and he was over the Slaney like a *bow-arra*.

"The whole thing wasn't half a quarter of a mile, but you'd laugh to look at Mr. Bruen striving to persuade his baste to follow me; and all he done was to stand on his hind legs, and keep weaving the others up in the air. To be sure but there was great shouting and huzzaing for myself; they thought maybe I'd take another *sponshee*, but they were disappointed: I did not wish to give hard usage to the brave *coppaleen*. So I swum him back, and if I wasn't treated and made much of, leave it till again.

"Now, wouldn't you think the least Squire Richards could do after that would be to make me sit in state in the big parlour from Monday morning till Saturday night; and treat me to *bouilly bawn*, and tay, and bacon, and white cabbage, and pop, and *starabout*, and white wine, and

punch, and mulled beer? Well, instead of that, I've nothing but the run of the kitchen, as I have at Father Murphy's and the ministher's, and here and every where else: so, Mr. O'Brien, don't be so much *stomached* when you see how better men than yourself is treated."

Some of the unpleasant feelings occasioned by Mr. O'Brien's discourtesy had been banished by the recital of Pat's exploit; but as the key-note at starting was now struck harshly again, the Roches got up, and taking a cordial leave of their entertainers, returned home, accompanied by Edward, and Charley, and myself.

After a few uncomplimentary remarks made by the master when we left, he suddenly observed to Sleeveen, that "he ought to follow young Roche, and give him the message he had for him." "Oh," said the worthy man addressed, "he is too far gone, and my old bones is stiff." "What is the important message?" said Mrs. O'Brien. "Ah, ma'am, nothing of the least consequence; not a ha'porth but a young ooman that met me in Back-lane a little before we left town. I disremember whether I ever *see* her before: she had a cap on, and I think her hair was reddish. And she says to me, as I was a-yoking of the beast to the car; says she, 'You don't happen to be from the neighbourhood of Castleboro', honest man? I think your face is familiar to me.' 'Throth then, ma'am,' says I, 'you have an advantage over me.' 'Ah, then!' says she, 'the advantage is generally on the other side: maybe you're a friend of Mr. Bryan Roche's.' 'I'm a neighbour of his, any way, ma'am,' says I; 'I hope your beauty is not intangled with him.' 'You're just like the rest of 'em,' says she; 'but maybe you'd obleege a body by telling Mr. Bryan that a friend of his was enquiring after him, and wondering how grand or forgetful he was grown; that there was no tale nor tidings from him for three market days; and if he forgot to come see her next Thursday, somebody would have to come out as far as Castleboro; and it would have a purty look for a young ooman to be calling at a young farmer's place, axin' after him with her finger in her mouth, and maybe settin' the neighbours' tongues a-goin'.' And now indeed I *dunna* what to do.

Maybe if I give him the message, it's small thanks I'll get; and if I don't, it's ten to one but she'll be coming out here some fine day, and shock poor Mr. and Mrs. Roche, when they find their son is not a patch on a saint's coat, but flesh and blood like any other neighbour's child.

Mrs. O'Brien.—If you have any regard for your four bones, Sleeveen, you had better take care what reports you spread abroad about Bryan. He is as quiet as a child, but when such people are once put in a passion, they have no command of themselves; and you might, as they say, find your thigh-bone in your breeches pocket before you knew rightly what you were about. If you are joking, you had better say so. No one from this to Enniscorthy ever heard of him having a word to say to a girl in the way you insinuate, and if you spread lies abroad it will fare the worse for yourself." "Musha, ma'am, you're always putting bad constructions on everything I say or do. What have I to gain by inventing lies about it? I tell you, ma'am, I was just yoking the car to go and call out the master and Mr. Mac Cracken; and by the same token the baste was very unaisy, and I was bothered between striving to yoke her and listen to the red-haired girl. Sure you know the place well enough—a little above Mr. *Booby's* (Boobier), the shoemaker; and between the bother from the baste and the woman, and she still keeping up the talk, I said I'd do it for her to get shut of her; and sure I told the master about the discourse when I went in to let him know it was time to come home. But, faith, I'll wash my hands out o' the matter altogether; and if the young mistress there, or any other neighbour's child happens to change her name for Roche, and finds a little family provided for her without any trouble to herself, let no one blame poor Sleeveen. God help the poor! everybody has the hard word for 'em. I think it's time to go to blanket-street; them that has hard labour before them oughtn't to neglect their natural rest."

During this discussion Theresa was disturbed, notwithstanding her strong faith in Bryan's good disposition; for she could not fancy Sleeveen to be so utterly wicked as to invent a downright lie to make mischief between them.

She held council with her mother, who strove to allay her uneasiness, though her own mind was not very comfortable. Neither mother nor daughter entertained a distinct impression of guilt on Bryan's part, especially as their opinion of Sleeveen's love of truth was very low ; still the vague suspicion rankled in their minds, deprived them of sleep that night, and was still annoying them during the ensuing day. To make the matter more perplexing still, some neighbour mentioned in the course of the day that he had seen Sleeveen talking to a women at the hour and place mentioned, but he was too indifferent on the subject to be able to decide on her age or the colour of her hair, and was not near enough to be able to pronounce whether Sleeveen was passively receiving a message or thinking of resuming the frolics of youth, despite his poverty and his grey hairs.

Book III.

ESTRANGEMENT.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE STATION.

JOANNA has been mentioned, and not much more, for she was so fond of gossipping, that had she got any liberty of speech, she would have prevented our slow-going chronicle from going on at all. Joanna was fond of her mistress and the family entire, the "head" excepted. She liked Bryan and his parents; she liked (perhaps loved) Tom Sweetman, though no one could accuse her of wasting sugared words on him in public. In fact, she liked every one more or less with the exception of Sleeveen.

She was determined that Bryan should be so innocent that blame could not attach to him in any shape. So she inquired of every one that happened to be at Enniscorthy next Saturday, when Bryan's business took him thither; and very much to her chagrin, found that he had been seen conversing with a young woman in Castle-street, and that with the same or another he was afterwards seen at the edge of the town in earnest discourse.

Now Joanna made these perquisitions entirely without the knowledge of her mistress, and was very much disconcerted by the results; still she kept her own counsel, watching an opportunity of requiring an explanation from the seeming culprit at proper time and place. Next Sunday she was returning in the evening from her mother's place in the village of Rathnure, and had crossed the brook that runs at the bottom of the village, and got up the lane to where the Gurrawn-road takes a sudden bend to the east, towards Mr. Horneck's; and what was her surprise to see Bryan very much at his ease walking in that same direc-

tion, and a young woman, either the original one, or young woman No. 4, walking and talking earnestly with him. She could scarcely trust her eyes, but Bryan's height and figure were not to be mistaken, though the backs of both were turned towards her; and a hearty laugh that broke from him at the moment removed all doubt on the subject.

She stood for some time gazing at their retiring figures in a state of wrath and wonder, and then turned down the road up which they had just come from Castleboro.

She arrived at the house in a very disturbed state of mind; and though she struggled hard to preserve her secret, the persistence of those about her and her resentment of Bryan's hypocrisy and falsehood soon drew it from her.

Now, in common with most quiet-mannered persons, Theresa was naturally proud, and her mortification was in proportion to the depth of her attachment, which, whether she acknowledged it to herself or not, was very great. She endured her sorrow in silence, and no one was aware of its quality or extent but her mother. In saying that Theresa was proud, I am very far from giving her commendation. If she was conscious of abilities, or good qualities, or personal beauty, the knowledge should have made her humble and thankful. What had she done to deserve these gifts of heaven more than you, gentle and good-natured reader, or than the conscientious compiler of this narrative?

And so, from this evening, a most uncomfortable feeling invaded the minds of some of the personages of our history. Hitherto, Bryan, being sensible that Theresa and himself need be in no particular hurry to draw on themselves the cares and responsibilities of a family; and not anxious to cause a division of domestic rule, where his mother had so long and so well swayed the household sceptre, was waiting as patiently as he could, till a piece of land, adjoining his father's farm, would come into his possession. The person who held it was in treaty for another tract of land, and was willing to give up his present holding to the Roches when the bargain was made. But all this could not be done in a day, and so, partly from the effect of timidity,

and partly from unwillingness to hamper Theresa by promises, he had hitherto made no open declaration of his attachment, nor proposal for her hand in marriage. When he would be about preparing a suitable home for his bride, then, and not till then, would he ask the interesting and awful question.

Miss O'Brien had hitherto set a just value on his manly character, his purity of life as far as could be known, his strong common sense, his dutiful deportment to his parents, and the absence of that detestable spirit of mocking and gibing that tarnishes so many of the good qualities of our Irish youths. She was not in a hurry to receive a formal proposal, for she was not very ignorant of the cause of delay, and was pretty confident of the depth of his attachment. Besides she felt how comfortless the daily life of her mother would be, when her own loving presence was exchanged for sorrowful loneliness. For Edward was virtually dead to the family circle, and her father was so intent on plans for gaining money, and augmenting his influence, and was so unsocial from his abstracted habits, that the poor mistress's daily life would become sad and weary when her affectionate girl was not there to shed comfort and gladness on the household life. So her days up to this time were marked by content, and were filled either with interesting incidents or expectations.

No day could pass without the presence of Bryan on some pretext or other. He was either getting a commission for purchases at Enniscorthy on market-day, or the proximity of the farms would make some cock-and-bull inquiry necessary, or he would be seeking news about his absent schoolfellow. Latterly the attentions of his rival had given him some concern. Though he was sensible he held a high place in Theresa's regard, he was painfully aware of his deficiencies in mere manner and accomplishments; besides, he dreaded the father's unfriendly feeling towards him, and his exertion of authority in favour of his rival.

The day following Joanna's visit to her mother, Bryan made one of his accustomed calls, but Theresa was not to be seen. He paid a visit next evening at an hour when he

might expect to find herself and her mother sitting at their ordinary occupation, but Theresa took an early opportunity of withdrawing, and did not appear again. The next day he made another effort, and was chilled to the marrow by the indifferent reception he met. The worst of it was, that he could get no opportunity for an explanation; and now scarcely a day passed without the presence of Mac Cracken on the farm or at the house.

Returning home in a disconsolate mood from Enniscorthy, he overtook Sleeveen at Scobie, sitting cozily on the hay in his car; and this worthy improved the occasion by setting forth, in his own lazy and simple fashion, how pleasantly things were going on between the young mistress and Mr. Mac Cracken; and how the gentleman was daily laying aside his grand method of talking, when he found it wasn't to the taste of herself or her mother; and that it was very likely that the marriage would take place next Shrovetide or Easter. And though the young lady did not shew much eagerness about his visits, she didn't avoid his company as she used to do; and when her father was pressing her to give her consent, he heard her asking for time till after Easter; and if she could then find it in her heart to comply, she wouldn't hold out against his wishes any longer.

Now the tender-hearted student is earnestly requested to bestow all his spare sympathy on our "patient" during this tedious operation of Sleeveen's, which endured from Scobie to Castleboro bridge. If Bryan was thoroughly innocent, pride, or shyness, or both, inflicted much sorrow and chagrin on himself and Theresa.

We are now in the depth of winter; the roads and fields are hard with frost, and the ponds by road sides are frozen, and the little boys going on errands wear out the soles of their brogues sliding on the ice. The loft in Mr. Roche's house is very little below the thatched roof. It is divided into three apartments, the light and air being admitted into the end rooms by windows which open in the day; but into the middle room over the kitchen there is not such welcome for either of these healthy ingredients, except through a window partly in the wall and partly in the roof,

as the top of the wall is very little raised above the level of the floor. However, the open staircase opens a free communication of air from the kitchen; and on sharp wintry nights it was a cozy room to sleep in, the warmth penetrating from the kitchen loft, and also escaping from the wide chimney, and being prevented from passing into the outer cold air by the thickly-scrawed and thatched roof. How any one not to the manner bred could sleep there in summer I do not know, or rather I do know, having once tried the experiment in Bryan's company. But on a cold winter's night, after such an evening as was lately described, it was delightful to feel everything so comfortable about us. The cold might reign abroad, but, snug under our thick coverings, and sheltered by the dry, warm roof over our heads, we set winter at defiance; Bryan revelling in the contemplation of the image of his darling, and recalling the tones of her sweet silvery voice, and myself thinking of the near termination of my school days.

In the enjoyment of such luxury, the prevailing impression was, that it would be delightful to stay awake all night, in order not to lose any part of it in unconsciousness; but we fell asleep notwithstanding, and at day-break we could see all our morning's discomfort even by the light of our small window. Gentle reader, when you awake on a miserable cold morning of this kind, and suffer the pang of impending divorcement from comfort, take this advice; if you have yet half an hour or an hour before you need make the awful change, turn to the wall, wrap the clothes round your shoulder, and go determinedly to sleep again. But if you have only a few minutes to remain, do not endure the misery of thinking; cry out, "St. George, or St. Patrick, or St. Andrew to the rescue!" fling off the bed-clothes with desperate resolution (have yourself shaved the evening before), plunge your face and hands into cold water, and get dressed as fast as you can, every minute diminishing your misery.

This was a dreary winter with Bryan; however, he went on mecanically with his ordinary occupation. After saying his prayers he went to look after the cattle, and perhaps

threshed vigorously after his breakfast of stirabout and milk; and you need not pity him for being chilly at all events. Little need he had for furs or mufflers; healthy exercise kept his blood flowing warmly and briskly through his veins, and nothing was wanting to his happiness but the expectation of meeting Theresa at the family union in the evening round the kitchen fire; she perhaps knitting, and he, if in luck, sitting beside her, and his dress touching hers accidentally (?), and herself asking or answering questions on common-place subjects, the matter nothing, but the manner everything in the world.

During this winter, however, all his exercises and employments were uninteresting and tedious. There was no room for blame, if at the desire of her father she received Mac Cracken's addresses; and why should he interfere in an unwelcome fashion, to prevent what might probably turn out a happy union. Still at times he reproached himself for his inaction, and was on the point of addressing either Mrs. O'Brien or Edward, but self-esteem interfered, and cried, "Bryan, this would be a mean step. If she prefer Nick, why should you be so mean as to beg a transfer of her choice?"

By-and-by the frost and snow began to vanish, and the fields to become cloddy and damp, and the lanes and roads full of mud, and the spring labours to commence; but by degrees the fields assumed the dry, drab, or brown colour of March; and except for the promise of the seed now deposited producing its fifty-fold increase for man's sustenance, the brown field, with the black manure heaps in rows, would have an uncheering look.

But the ploughman has no eye for landscape beauty; he is intent on making a clean straight furrow, and if he possesses the secret of executing the ploughman's whistle, he beguiles both his horses and himself of the feeling of weariness.

It is interesting to remark how the succession of a few simple sounds falling on the ears of some people, should keep their entire sensitive consciousness suspended in ecstacy as long as the same process continues. Such is the effect of most plaintive Irish melodies on ourselves; such

is the effect of some church pieces, such as the "In Exitu Israel de Egypto." On this subject we wrote several pages in our first draft of this work to confound the materialists. Reflecting on the hold which self-complacency has over these geniuses, we have omitted the passage.

All this time Bryan has been left holding the plough; and the season being Lent, the day a dry one in March, and the hour half-past twelve, ploughman and driver keep a look out towards the house. If they are at a distance, a white cloth is hung out on a hedge; and if near, the servant girl stands on the bawn fence, and shouts at them, applying the palm of her hand to her mouth at intervals to give sharper effect to the call. The personages of this history being provided with good appetites, especially in the spring, the dinner of good potatoes and eggs, or fish, or butter and milk, is highly relished, especially by Tom Sweetman, if Joanna drops in by accident, and takes a sup from his noggin. Observing on one occasion "what a fine appetite he had," little Peggy remarked that "he ought to be very thankful for his good appetite." This was a year or two before, when the child's acquaintance with the spelling-book not being profound, she was under the impression that *appetite* and *food* were words of the same signification. Tom laughed heartily, and said that "he would often be very thankful to have no appetite at all, especially in spring." What a world it would be, if ploughmen and epicures could on occasions transfer their peculiar privileges to each other!

Now let not some tender-hearted reader, unused to fast and abstinence, pity our country friends too much for their temporary mortifications. When we exempt young persons, and aged persons, labourers, and sick people, the remaining portion are in little need of misdirected sympathy; any physiologist will bear witness to the benefit of moderate voluntary abstinence.

When a child, I knew a branch of the early Anglo-Norman settlers in Wexford: the family lived in a fine old manor house, lofty in my young eyes as a castle. The dowager lady combined in her own person the blood of

the three great families of Hy-Kinsalach, O'Byrn, O'Toole, and O'Kavanagh, the "Three Terrors of the Sassanach," as they were called in old times. The members of the family would not break the law of abstinence that forbade the use of flesh-meat on Fridays and Saturdays; not they; but on Saturday nights they experienced a very decided wish for a relish in the guise of savoury beef-steak or mutton-chop. So they conquered ennui and sleep as best they might, and bravely kept awake till the advent of Sunday morning.

The much coveted delicacy was reposing under the cover, smoking hot and emitting a savoury odour, as the clock struck twelve; but see what fortitude and patience will effect! The knives and forks were held suspended in air, and the teeth of every mouth were idle, while the hammer kept pounding the bell; and though the tongue might smack and the eye wink in impatience, no one attempted to fall to, till the sound of the last stroke was vibrating.

The neighbours took the liberty of saying that this was keeping the commandment in the mere letter, while the spirit was neglected. I wish that, instead of indulging uncharitable remarks, they would for once have tried the experiment, and tested the bitterness of deferred enjoyment. Does any one envy the happiness of a cat, while she burns with desire to extinguish an unfortunate mouse from which she is only separated by a few thin bars of wire?

All this time our lovers were doing their best to endeavour to forget each other, but they only succeeded to a trifling extent. It may be objected that very little effort was necessary to dispel the mist that separated them; but when pride or self-will has any thing to do with the cobweb barriers which we set up as our limits, we seldom venture to pass through them.

Poor Joanna was during this period either seriously ill of fever, or slowly recovering from it at her mother's house in the village of Upper Rathnure; and Tom Sweetman, who called to see her on Sundays and holidays, and even on week days when he could, did not disturb her with an account of the bad state of things; for he knew her sincere

affection for Theresa and Bryan, and feared to excite her while in the weak state that ensued on the abatement of the violence of the malady.

The only thing that broke the monotony of spring labour and Lent was a station held at the Roches. It was given out, as usual, at the chapel on the previous Sunday; and there was great scrubbing and scouring in and round the house for the next three days, the station being appointed for Thursday. There were symptoms of the gathering as early as eight o'clock; and those of the family not intent on the religious duty took an early breakfast under difficulties, and as if ashamed of the operation. The neighbours, as they assembled, lounged about the yard, went into the haggard, or barn, or the large kitchen; and disposed themselves to prayer and meditation as best they might. Two or three old cronies ensconced themselves round the kitchen fire, and though they appeared to regard the want of breakfast with great unconcern, their hands went into their pockets more than once in search of the treacherously-consoling *dhudheen*. The sight or touch, however, reminded them of the solemn business in hand, and down went the pipe into its receptacle till a more fitting opportunity. After turning over in their minds the account they were to render, and striving to excite sorrow for all sins remembered since last confession, by meditation and earnest prayers for contrition, there came in many cases over some a degree of lassitude mixed with an uneasy expectation of the arrival of the clergymen, a general feeling of distraction in the mental exercise, and a sharpened attention to outward sounds.

A great variety might be witnessed in the power of attention possessed by different individuals; some finding it impracticable to pray or meditate above seven or eight minutes, and others seeming from the beginning fully abstracted from outward influences. Mr. and Mrs. Roche having devoted an early portion of the day to the preparatory duty, were now sitting at each side of the fire, and chatting with those who seemed to require a little relaxation from their studies. Little Pat and Peggy, with faces and hands shining after a good scrubbing, and dresses so

stiff and fresh, seemed to have a deal of business on hands, carrying messages backwards and forwards, saying prayers for two minutes at a time, and then gabbling with each other. Neither Mr. O'Brien nor his vassal had been at their duty for years. Most of the dependants of his afmily were present, but Theresa's absence was remarked; Edward was at his business miles away; Mrs. O'Brien was expected to attend.

As the morning wore on, the conversation in the kitchen and through the yard became of a disjointed and uneasy character; yawns were frequent, and no one seemed thoroughly at ease, it was so unusual at that hour to see every thing so clean and formally arranged, and the marks of shelly-sand here and there, and every one's best clothes on, in which they did not appear at all comfortable, and every one's hands unoccupied. If the priests delay much longer, there will be some screws loose. "Pat, run out to the lane, and see if Father Furlong and the curate are coming." Oh, joy! Pat returns at full speed. "Here they are, here they are!" and you would fancy as if it were the screwing and tightening of all the wire strings in an orchestra. Every one's mind at once experiences a healthy tension; the relaxed betake themselves to their prayers again, and the very humble or very devout keep in the back ground. Manuals are once more opened, pulses beat quicker, and lips move noiselessly in silent prayer. Bryan and Tom are at hand to take the clergymen's horses, and see them cared for; and Pat looks so wistful at the saddle, that Bryan throws him up, and gives him a triumphant ride up and down the lane. The clergymen enter the kitchen, shake hands with the master, and mistress, and some others, talk for a few minutes over the topic of the time, and then retire to their posts; Father Furlong to the parlour above the kitchen, the curate to the room opposite the fire.

How calm and happy are the minutes that succeed this sacred and consoling duty, and how restless and uncomfortable the mind of the devout liver, prevented from enjoying the blessing at his regular periods. But what heavy cares were pressing on the minds of Pat and Peggy, and how

perturbed their spirits, and what an amount of business had they on hands! Little rest did their neighbours enjoy, so many questions had they to ask, and so frequent were their incomings and outgoings; and in the middle of their occupation, some chance mention of the coming *pleidogue* on Easter Monday would introduce an incongruous interlude.

When the awful moment arrived, and poor Pat shewed the white feather, Peggy exhibited a manly spirit, and though with a beating at her little heart, boldly entered the sanctuary. It would be a work requiring study and innate skill to pourtray Pat's inner man while Peggy was at her confession; but when she came out with a cheerful though serious countenance, he took heart of grace and went through the ordeal.

To add to the clergyman's sufficiently laborious task, he has not only to point out the gravity and evil results of such and such faults, but also to quiet the consciences of sundry scrupulous and weak-minded penitents when they reveal things not sinful in their nature, but which of course are really so to those who do them, not while uncertain whether they are wrong or not. Such was, I suppose, part of Father Furlong's task with our young penitents. Mr. Roche was amused, and a little frightened by some confidential overtures on their parts, as if they were going to enter on a repetition with himself. However, on being informed of the impropriety of such a repetition, it was abandoned at once.

All having performed their duty, and having afterwards employed their time in endeavouring to bring the affections and desires of their souls to a state befitting their approaching communion, H. W. being specially retained on this occasion, arranged the altar cloths and vestments on the parlour table, and Mass commenced. The room is pretty large, and if the crowd is straightened, they have the adjoining passage at their command. I have not been more devoutly impressed at High Mass celebrated by an archbishop in a cathedral, than on occasions like the present. There is a silence the most profound, broken only by the voice of the clergyman, or the responses of the

clerk, or the ringing of the little bell, or the low whispered prayers of some of the collected worshippers. Perhaps the circumstance of all being known to each other, and no one willing to draw attention on himself by any noise, had something to do with the decent solemnity of the little crowd, but it chiefly arose from the contemplation of the approaching awful mystery of the spiritual life. Over this, and the preparatory exhortation of the priest, we shall drop the curtain of silence, being convinced that it would require a peculiar genius and profound piety to do ordinary justice to the subject.

All being now concluded, the little congregation disperse with happy thoughts and feelings. Mrs. O'Brien is asked to stay and join their breakfast, but civilly excuses herself and departs, and Mrs. Roche is once more in her element, distributing the good things of the tea table to the priest, and a few particular friends, and to H. W. for his services at Mass.

Fearing that we have detained our readers over past tea-tables longer than we ought, he shall receive no particular invitation to the present entertainment; but he will please to sympathise with the delightful fluttered spirits of Pat, and Peggy, as they were noticed and spoken to by the good and affable clergymen.

CHAPTER XXV.

FATHER JAMES.

From thinking and talking of the priests who had done duty that day with us, the discourse wandered to Father James Murphy of Coolbawn, who, not very willingly on his own part, had been some time before transferred from among his loving and loved parishioners, and from his little farm, his little kitchen garden, and little paddock, to live at the sea-side among the *Macamores*. H. W. happened to be a near neighbour of the good priest from about 1810 to 1814, and as some of the company were aware that he had had the good fortune to be a favourite with Father James, they requested some information about

his life and habits. This was very readily given, for the narrator's feelings towards his lost patron consisted of reverence for a truly devout clergyman, and attachment to a kind friend. For present purposes it is more convenient to speak to my readers than quote the words addressed to the company at Mrs. Roche's. A little local information will not be amiss.

From the Blackstairs, one of the N. W. boundaries of Wexford, the brawling Urrin runs down through woodland and meadow, till it falls into the Slaney below Enniscorthy; and from Mam-a-Chualagh, between the White Mountain and Blackstairs, and near the entrance of Cahir-Ruadh's Den, flows the Boro nearly parallel to the Urrin, but drawing closer as it proceeds, till it also joins the Slaney at a lower or more southern point than the other.

Two roads lead from Bunclody, S. W. to New Ross, one keeping pretty high on the side of the mountains, and the other lower in the country, their course being nearly parallel. The Boro crosses the upper road at the Crooked-bridge, and the lower road at the bridge of Tomenine; and about two miles below this it passes under the woods of Lord Carew's demesne. For a good part of its course it has all the character of a mountain stream, and it is, or was, abundant in delicious trout. Deep pools are frequent; and some of the happiest hours of my life were spent fishing or swimming in its refreshing waters.

Between Tomenine bridge and Castleboro a little stream falls into it, after running through a deep dale whose sides have no better ornament than clumps of furze bushes.

At the very apex of the angle formed by stream and river shot up a high thick fence, overrun with bushes and shrubs; a very minute plantation lay next this, and then a closely shaven paddock, divided from the kitchen garden by a hedge of thorn. This paddock was fringed by the stream before referred to; it had a southern aspect, and a seat along a portion of the hedge; and on this seat on fine evenings the priest read his Breviary. The kitchen garden was bounded northwards by a deep pool in the Boro, and through an opening in the hedge Father James

was accustomed every morning, winter and summer, to spring into this deep pool, and splash about with the grace and agility of a young porpoise.

Dear, kind-hearted, hasty, generous, saving, devout, simple-minded Father James, I wish I could make every phase of your busy, edifying life, as it used to fall under my observation, as interesting to my hearers as their memory is to myself: now hurrying, after a long ride, up through the chapel-yard of Rathnure, to celebrate second Mass; now drawing on your boots at a late hour of a winter's night, to sally forth on a long ride into the mountain to anoint some poor parishioner, and probably to relieve the misery of his family—scolding the messenger vigorously all the while for not calling on you at an earlier hour; now returning to the chapel in the Sunday afternoon, after all the fatigue of the early part of the day, to prepare your negligent but loving young flock for confirmation; now riding home at sunset, in the middle of the little army, joking, and reproving, and laughing, till a gloom would seize you when your eye fell on Darby (son of) Luke; for all the wit of Solomon, or all the *cloughs* of Kilaughrim, as you often observed, could not beat the catechism into his head. Then on a cold winter's night you were sure to be found sitting at your little round table, nigh the kitchen-fire, reading your Office; and now and then interrupting the exercise, to resume some convervation with the poor crazy strollers who were enjoying the blaze, and to whom your hospitable hearth was ever an asylum. Often, when you have come into the kitchen while the labourers and servants were at their dinner round the large kitchen table, have I seen you bring over a beggar's child by the hand, and peel the potatoes for it; and alas! more than once have I seen you sink into your chair after such a winter-night's expedition as I have just mentioned, completely overcome, and exclaiming, "How preferable would be the life of a cottier!" Yet in half an hour, when cheered up by the attentions of your angel of a sister, your restored cheerfulness and good nature would diffuse happiness on all round.

My father's house was outside of the smaller stream,

which was crossed by a stout flag resting on either bank. So if Father Murphy was going to a Station, and wanted a clerk, if he had no one to mind his favourite mare (who, by the way, was a great rogue) in a corner of the meadow; if he had procured a new book such as Father Gahan's Bible, and wished to indulge me with the reading of it; if some women had made a descent from a mountain village to get an infant baptized, and were unprovided with a godfather, some one was sure to come to the bawn gate, and shout across the stream, "Harry, you're *wanting*," and in three bounds I was down the descent, across the flag, and in the priest's presence. To say truth, I thought that I got rather too much employment in the matter of the little postulants for baptism; and in some instances latterly I lay hid in the furzy valley, when I was aware of an irruption of the womankind down the side of the opposite hill. It was different with the marriages, however: the confusion and awkwardness of the interested parties, and the generally successful efforts of old Jemmy Flynn to deprive the new husband of the first salute, made these occasions more piquant than edifying.

Let us now accompany the good father for a part of a Sunday in the ordinary routine of his duty.

Rising at an early hour, and equipping himself for his forenoon's labour, the mare is brought out, and off they wend. Facing south-west up the gentle rise that leads to the White Mountain, he is jogging along through very stony lanes, till at last he emerges on the upper road before alluded to.

As he passes along, one or two of every road-side family are sure to present themselves for a kind recognition, and are seldom disappointed. Probably the morning is a fine one in summer: then, while proceeding through bye-lanes with the breast of the White Mountain lying before him in its dark purple, warm red, and bright green mantle, and the corn and potato-fields and pastures smiling around; and the happy cows, horses, and sheep looking lazily at him over the hedges; and the lark thrilling her song over his head, and the hum of insects rising from the pastures, and the hollows and distant objects still enveloped in a

silvery haze; no wonder that the spirits of our good pastor should rise, and that, lifting his hat for a moment to cool his brow, he should burst out into a very unmusical strain, and that the choice of the poetry would be of very secondary consideration.

As he nears the high road leading to Templeudigan, perhaps he recollects that he will have to administer to his flock a castigation for some scandal, such as the throwing of metal bowls along the high road, a dance gathering at some sheebeen, or a hurling match embellished with a fight: then his spirits go down to zero, the song is extinguished, and the mare gets an involuntary prick of the spur.

Now are seen thronging along the road, and down from the scattered hamlets on the hill, the blue or red cloaks of the women, and the brown or blue coats of the men: the priest approaches the little chapel, chatting with the company he has overtaken or joined; the earlier attendants who had repeated some prayers, and were now lying or sitting on the grassy slopes fencing the yard, rise and pour into the edifice; and the mare is taken and put into a stable, and Father James, passing up through the centre of his flock, prepares to celebrate Mass. Happy is the Sunday when, no scandal having occurred through the week, he need not give way to anger or grief while preaching his short and nervous sermon after the communion; and hard and perverted must be the unfortunate rogue who can listen, and not wish to sink into the earth, when he feels himself the cause of the painful emotion of the clergyman, and the object of the pity of the congregation.

It is now, perhaps, about half-past eleven or so; and having once more mounted, and turned his course north, he can, from his high position on the hill-slope, see over the low country, with its woods, and streams, and chequered fields, from below Ross to the far Duffrey.

The view being familiar, and Father James not having any very particular turn for landscape-painting, he pushes on, there being yet four good miles through rough and hilly roads to traverse to his next station. We, the inhabitants of the northern part of the parish, have been

lying on the grass in the chapel-yard of Rathnure on the lower road for an hour or so, till at last we hear the welcome sound, "Here's the priest," and now we crowd in. The wallet holding the vestments and sacred vessels is brought from the front of the saddle, the altar is laid, the clergyman vested, and another juvenile and myself, robed in white surplices, attend Mass as well we can, while the congregation stand or kneel on the floor composed of good strong lime-mortar. Mass is said, a short exhortation is given, the stations for the next week are announced, and the children directed to return after dinner to be instructed in the catechism. We are now at about half-past one o'clock. Father James has as yet tasted no corporal food, but he is within about a mile and a half of his own house, and on getting there his well-earned breakfast will be ready.

This picture presents the Sunday duty in the most favourable light; but I have known instances where it had to be done in the depth of snow, and where the mare's services could not be made available. Two strong young men went with Father James through his pilgrimage; and when he was nearly overcome by fatigue and want of nourishment, they supported him at each side, a part of the way from one chapel to the other. I never saw him nearly defeated, except on this and one other occasion.

Having now enjoyed his very late breakfast, and given a look through his cabbage and flower-garden, he is once more on the move, and, accompanied by a troop of the neighbouring children, he sets off again to the chapel of Rathnure. We had no confraternity, and indeed I cannot help comparing our pastor to a bustling mistress of a house, who will persist in doing everything with her own hands, instead of training her daughters to superintend portions of the domestic economy. Thus the girls grow up lazy and useless, the poor mother is worn out before her time, and the wheel creaks and runs out of its track, and the noise of scolding is heard in the household.

Well, the classes are settled, some of the smartest boys help to instruct, and H. W. is enjoined to teach Darby the answers to one or two questions. On one occa-

sion, the whole gist of the task lay in about five lines; and H. W. worked at his hopeful pupil for two hours, and can declare with truth that Darby could repeat the answer as well at the end as at the beginning, and that H. W. was so stupified with the monotony of the operation, that he did not remember a single word of it himself; so that Darby completely stultified his teacher, instead of the teacher enlightening Darby, and Father Murphy on learning the result had like to faint. The poor priest frequently exercised his inventive powers in finding comparisons for Darby's head; it was an anvil, a sieve, a grinding-stone, a lump of jelly, and a snail-box; and so much did Darby's ignorance affect him, that he was often heard talking to himself, and still the burthen was Darby's stupidity, and the disgrace he would bring on the parish when the Bishop came to hold the next confirmation.

The sun being now inclined to make a descent on the White Mountain, and the flock in the chapel getting tired, the priest goes inside the rails, and we join him in the responses of the Litany of our Lord or the Blessed Virgin. He then thunders out a hymn, commonly the Easter "*O Filii et Filiæ*," and we are refreshed by the exercise of singing the alternate verses. Rising, he addresses a few words of advice and encouragement, utters a short and fervent benediction; and, at the very concluding words, his eye meeting the awful phantasm of Darby's big face, and open mouth, and meaningless eyes, he utters, in a desponding tone, "Oh Darby Luke, will you ever know your catechism!"

Some of us run beside the Father the long way round, and others go across the fields by a well-worn path which leads through two raths, with entrances as usual at opposite sides, and a fine circular fence round them; the sides covered with fine short grass, the summit crowned with large furze-bushes, and the area of the rath as green as an emerald. Now we have descended to the Boro, where the river and stream meet at the end of the priest's garden, and cross it on the broad, flat stepping-stones. As we enter the paternal roof, we hear a voice pitched in a lofty key, and apparently not proceeding from the lungs of a philo-

sopher. It belongs to Jemmy F., one of the class that is called in Scotland "*The unco guid,*" and "*Voteens*" among ourselves. Catholics and Protestants happening to live close to each other were mostly on good terms, but Jemmy being next door to people who were Protestants and yeomen, and being gifted with a little bit of spiritual pride, managed somehow or other to enjoy a most unfriendly relation with his neighbours.

He was now sitting within, and we could hear him laying a thick coat of obloquy on the church-going population. "Yes, ma'am," (addressing my mother), "they pitch-capped us, and they shot us, and they burned our houses, and they still grind us with their tithes and taxes, and they never fast, and they hardly pray at all, and they treat us like the scum of the earth, and they think the worst word in their mouth good enough for us.

Mrs. W.—Lord bless us! Mr. F., this is frightful; and does Mrs. Deacon or Mrs. Wiseman never show any kindness to their poor Catholic neighbours, or the beggars, and do they speak so scornfully as you say to the people? I hear every one saying that they and their families are kind and cordial people, and never utter a harsh word to a Catholic, gentle or simple.

Jemmy.—Oh I don't care a figgin for what they do. They never go to church any Sunday that it happens to rain, while if it was pouring cats and dogs, it would not keep us or our people from Mass: and then if it is fine, they only go to show their grand clothes, and sit as proud as paycocks in their pews, and remark one another's dresses: ah! where do they expect to go after all this!

Mrs. W.—I'll tell you, Mr. F.: there is a very high hill in the other world, and the top of it is piercing cold; and the Protestants who were black, and bitter, and bad livers are set on the top of this hill exposed to the cutting blasts. Others that were not so bad are let down towards the middle; and the good and charitable Protestants who did not dislike the Catholics, and were devout in their own way, and did not accuse us of worshipping images, or our priests of giving leave to commit sin, and who had a kind of love and respect for the Blessed Virgin and the Saints—

all these good souls are settled down in the warm nook at the bottom, and have a comfortable feel of sunshine about them.

Mr. F.—Oh, Mrs. Whitney, if these are your notions, you might as well be a heretic yourself. I'll be off this moment over the flag, and see if Father Murphy approves of your very queer ideas. [Exit Jemmy down the lane, possessed with a strong feeling of holy resentment.]

After a few moments, Mrs. W. and a few neighbours follow the zealous professor, being apprehensive that in his version of the conference strict justice to his opponent would be neglected, and no allowance made for a charitable and poetic colouring.

The fire-place in the priest's kitchen is very large. There is a partition-wall as usual between the door and the fire, with a spy-hole in the middle. A form inside runs along this wall, and at the end of it, farthest from the fire, is settled a very small round table for the books and the candlestick when he is reading his Office. There he sits wrapped in a cloak on winter nights; the rest of the form up to the corner next the fire is occupied by the neighbours who drop in to tell or hear news, and under them in the very angle is a deep hole to receive the dry ashes. A form on the opposite side has its tenants also; the front is occupied with stools or straw bosses; a double space being allowed for the servant boy, Jemmy Reddy, who supplies fuel to the huge pot of potatoes suspended from a beam up in the chimney.

On this evening the priest has not yet come down from the parlour; and we all take our seats, the juniors chiefly on the upper end of the priest's form; and Jemmy's rage is almost choking him. Down comes Father James at last, and gives us all a kind welcome; but he has hardly taken his seat, when out come in a confused torrent Jemmy's recriminations, in which Mrs. Deacon, Mrs. Whitney, Harry the Eighth, the devil, Jemmy himself, Martin Luther, Billy Pitt, and Archy Jacob get inextricably mixed.

Father James.—Bless me, Mrs. Whitney, what have you

done to Mr. F. to put him in such a rage, and it being Sunday evening and all?

Jemmy.—Yes, indeed, sir, and I only after composing a new prayer to-day; and I was coming to repeat it to your Reverence just now, but this woman's aggravation has put every word of it out of my head.

Father M.—Well, well; sure you have the Lord's Prayer, and the Hail Mary, and the Creed, and the Confiteor still to fall back on; and indeed, Jemmy, I'll be quite content if you use the common prayers, and not trouble your head inventing new ones. But what wonderful crime has Mrs. Whitney committed this evening?

Jemmy.—Why, sir, didn't I mention, over and over, that she said it was only the very bad Protestants that would——

Here Mrs. Whitney interposed, and in a humourous manner illustrated the plan of the Elysium she had invented for Jemmy's amusement; and the priest was so tickled with the idea, and the vexation that sat on Jemmy's cross face, that he burst into a succession of fits of laughter, to which the company, Jemmy excepted, bore hearty chorus.

As soon as he was able to speak after his explosion, he administered a trifle of Job's comfort to the crest-fallen voteen. "Oh, 'pon my veracity, Jemmy, 'twas really too bad of Mrs. Whitney to circumvent you in this way: but tell me, are you any nearer now than you were a year or two ago, to the conversion of these obstinate yeomen you have for neighbours?

Jemmy.—Oh! not a bit, sir; they are as conthrāry as pigs, and as obstinate as mules; and we are getting on worse and worse terms with one another every day, be hanged to them!

Father M.—Oh, Jemmy, Jemmy; I fear you are the least bit in the world uncharitable. I'm sure that there is some personal spite, and a good deal of desire for mere victory in the discussions that go on between you and your yeomen, and I cannot see anything but harm in your keeping them up. Depend on it, a controversy must be conducted by a genuine love of our kind, and a mild and

humble spirit, to be productive of any benefit. We must use mildness, and patience, and await God's good time. Meanwhile, Jemmy, as your belief is fervent, and your hope strong, let charity be abundant; and remember that the most prejudiced Protestant in the world is your brother, and as such entitled to your love, and earnest prayers for his salvation. Above all things, Jemmy, if you hear any loose-spoken Catholic take the liberty of saying that such or such Protestant or bad-living Catholic made a bad end, and is gone to hell, check him in a friendly way, Jemmy. Tell him that we cannot know without a miracle how such a person's soul stood before his Creator during his last moments. God forgive and strengthen us all, and give me patience with Darby Luke. Oh, Darby, you dunce, will you ever have your catechism? Your head is no better than a sieve, and wont keep a single word of what you learn; and so little understanding as you have about the easiest things! I only asked him last Sunday why did he say the "Hail Mary" after the "Lord's Prayer," and what do you think was his answer?

H. W. very briskly gave the response out of Devereux's Catechism.

Father Murphy.—A likely story, indeed, that he would be so condescending as to give that answer! no, but the thief of the world said it was because that was the way his mother *larned* it to him.

The nature of the subject hindered the company from a laugh, besides they pitied the distress of the poor priest; and so he went on with his lamentation:

"And now the bishop is expected to come to Cloughbawn chapel to hold a confirmation in about three weeks; and wont we cut a neat figure with Darby to do us credit? I'm sure I'd rather spend a night in Cahir Ruadh's Den than face the bishop with him.

Mrs. Doyle, the priest's sister.—James, James, dear, have patience; all will turn out well with God's blessing. Sure you are doing everything in your power: leave the rest to HIM.

Father James.—Patience, do you say, woman! I have more patience at this moment than I ever thought I was

master of. [This was not exactly Mrs. D.'s candid opinion; but she kept it to herself.]

Mr. F. finding himself in an uncomfortable minority of one, retired soon after, and might have been found later that night composing new prayers, and devising new arguments to demolish his antagonists.

People of Jemmy's class are very little comfort, I'm sure, to their neighbours. I knew one voteen who used to select a very sharp winter evening as a fitting time to set to his prayers in the middle of the high road. Well, thank God, for one false voteen, we have a hundred of the really and unobtrusively devout.

This, if I recollect rightly, was about the year 1811, when a splendid comet was visible to us for weeks, burning over Cahir Ruadh's Den. Many an evening did I sit on the bawn fence, contemplating with awe this unusual phenomenon, the dimly obscure mountain underneath, the glowing twilight sky above, fading into deep blue towards the zenith, and the vapoury tail of the comet issuing upright from the luminous body. The feeling was very prevalent in our neighbourhood, that both body and tail consisted of fire; and in some publication that came across us, it was said that if the comet came in contact with the earth, the latter body would be burnt up, and consumed as rapidly as a ball of worsted by a red-hot bar of iron.

Jemmy Flynn had heard this passage read; and to show his learning, asked Father Murphy some questions about the nature of comets, and if any public prayers were to be offered up to save the world from the danger that was likely to happen.

"What danger have you heard of, Jemmy?" "Why, sir, sure I heard the *master* read out of a book the other evening, that the comet was to fall down upon the world in three weeks time, and that wherever it would 'light, it would do great mischief, and burn a bar of iron three inches thick." The priest now endeavoured to enlighten his audience on the economy of our solar system; but though Jemmy did not openly find fault with the movements as explained, any one might readily see that he had still great

confidence in the stability of the earth, and preferred that the sun should go his daily round as usual. Mrs. Flynn, however, let her unbelief be a little more apparent; and when snubbed by some one for thinking she knew better than the priest, she replied very sharply, "that though Father James knew everything about religion, and prayers, and confessions, *and that*, still she would find it very hard to believe that the earth stirred." "Now let yez go out any hour of the day or night," said she, "and you'll see the mountains and the Castleboro woods in their place, and the Boro itself running down from the White Mountain: and I'm sure if the earth was to be whirling round the way that Father James says, the big stones on the mountain, and the turf clamps, and the water of the river, would be thrown up in the blue sky; ay, and ourselves get a *hoise*, and maybe fall down on the top of Castleboro and be kilt."

Another attempt was now made to give Mrs. Flynn an idea of the attraction of gravitation, and how it was calculated to prevent such undesirable accidents; but no conversion was effected, and she openly declared her opinion "that unless for priests, and gentlemen, and shopkeepers, and 'tornies, she saw no use in larning children to read and write; it only made them proud."

Mrs. W.—Ah, then, Mrs. Flynn; have you forgotten about the pound-note, and all the loss you suffered by finding it?

Mrs. Flynn.—Indeed an' I have not: there is mighty little justice in the world, at any rate in Enniscorthy. Your Reverence must know that I was in the shop of Mr. Casey, the grocer in Main-street, about a month ago; and I saw a crumpled piece of thin paper at my foot, and took it up, and was looking at it, when an ugly *scradheen* of a clerk behind the counter says to me, 'What is that you're looking at, ma'am?' 'Musha,' says I, 'myself doesn't know what it is, but I believe it is a note.' 'Shew it,' says he; and, like a fool, I handed it over to him; and while he was examining it, his employer asked him what it was, and says he, 'it's a note.' 'Put it up, put it up,' says the master, says he, 'and if we can't find the

owner, we'll give it for God's sake.' 'Ethen,' says I, 'I think it's myself that ought to get leave to do that:' but *bad scran* to the note they'd give me back; and there I lost three market-days since, going to the town, and paying a testher every time to Browsy the bell-man to advertise it, and still and all I never was able to get the owner, and had all the trouble and expense for nothing.

Michael the Gow.—And now, Mrs. Flynn [he pronounced the word *Fling*], what harm would a little larning have done you about the same dirty piece of paper? Sure I was taking a drop behind the tea-chests the same day; and when you were gone out, I heard the grocer and his man laughing enough to crack their sides: it was all to take a *rise* out of you they done it, and nothing else. I was drinking at the time with Tom Blanche the tailor, and arguing Scripture with him. The dawny little crathur was pretending that a tailor was the first trade; 'for,' says he, 'didn't Adam sew fig-leaves together for aprons for himself and Eve?' Well, the company looked at him, and at one another, and at me, as if they thought there was no going beyond that; but I only took a pull at the pot of beer that was before us, and says I to him, 'Mr. Blanche, you little *sprishan* of a tailor, who made the needle for him? will you answer me that?' I didn't leave a word in his cheek; and I was obliged to take a pull out of every one's pint, and left town in great spirits. By the time I got home, however, I was very cross and *touchous*, and gave Moll a black eye, for she aggravated me just as if I was sober. Troth I wish she'd stay at home, and mind her house and her children, instead of taking her stocking, and gossiping in the neighbours' cabins. Well, well, I'm not worse off than others, I suppose. I never knew a smith to have a good wife but one, and that was poor Shān Burke, and little good it done him, poor fellow; for while he was hammering ding dong in his forge one day, an idle, talking, *stronshuch* came in, and says he, 'Ah, Shān, you're slaving audry hard, poor man, and where's the use? While you're Jemmy yourself, Dick Grimes is keeping company with explained, at home.' Poor Shān dropped the hammer as if

he was shot; put on his coat and hat, and took to the *yalla* high road, and never spent an hour in his own house again, but kept going about crazy from that day to this, and all for the one idle word of that vagabone.

"Oh Lord," said he, shutting his fist and grinding his teeth, "wouldn't I like to have the *villianous* make-mischief before me? If I *didn't* make his bones sore in *one five* minutes, you need never call me *Mihal, the Gow Shromach*, again; and all the time the poor wife as innocent as little Peggy there."

The smith was sitting on the same form with the clergyman, but nearer the chimney-corner; and Jemmy Reddy, who was supplying fuel to the big pot, kept the fire very hot on Michael's side, but he was so interested in his own narrative that he overlooked the roguery: however, he was obliged to keep continually rubbing his shins to mollify the irritation. Father James had shut his book, and kept looking into the smith's face with such a pretended interest, that all escape from the roasting was out of the question; and the audience were in a most ridiculous state, striving to keep in their merriment. However, the fate of poor Burke, whom they had all seen, and fed, or lodged in turn, threw a sadness over them as the story drew to an end; and so Reddy laid aside his tricks, Father James withdrew his countenance, and relief came to the half-roasted shins of the good-hearted though bibulous Gow.

On these occasions the visits of Pat Neil and Bet-na-Dheega were particularly desirable; and their squabbles and wayward controversies on every sort of subject afforded dear Father James much amusement. When Pat was about to indulge the company with the tragedy of the *Sea Captain*, Father James would come to the yard-gate, and shout across the little stream, summoning some of our family to come and enjoy the treat.

Well, the *white-friars* came at last on the potatoes in the big pot: they then proceeded to boil, and were discharged in due time into a basket which was placed on a large tub. Being now poured out on the broad table, and the milk supplied in plentiful-looking noggins, all the poorer neighbours and a stroller or two were drawn over, whether they

would or no, and made to join the family supper. Father James on occasions enjoyed the luxury of hot-cake and tea; but many and many an evening he had only his plate of potatoes laid on his little table, and was indulged with a print of butter, merely to mark the boundary between himself and the rest. Cheerful chat went on during supper, and then the priest retired, first exacting a solemn promise from H. W. that he would do the impossible with Darby Luke during the ensuing week.

Two or three hundred children were assembled in the green chapel-yard of Cloughbawn in about a fortnight afterwards, and examined under the inspection of Dr. Ryan, the bishop. Our poor Father was fidgetty in the early part of the day, but his little flock did not disgrace him; and even Darby's omissions attracted no great notice.

After the confirmation we betook ourselves home through the demense, and I am sorry to say that we made free with several green boughs along Colaght road, but I am sure that the proprietor has long since forgiven us. We slept soundly that night after the fatigue and long fast; and I am sure that Father James's evenings and nights were happy for some time, on his being relieved from the harassing anxiety of the past few months.

Book IV.

RECONCILIATION.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TORN WEB.

On Good Friday there was little eaten by the various personages of our story except dry potatoes. Next day the O'Brien family was enlivened by the return of Joanna. Every attention had been paid to her during her illness; and now she was much affected by the settled sorrow which she could detect in the mood of her young mistress. She plied her with questions, and having found out as much as she could, she remained nearly certain that Bryan's heart was true and his conduct blameless, in spite of the strong suspicion of his infidelity. She ascertained that Mac Cracken was not received on the footing of an accepted lover; that his suit was not indiscreetly pressed; and that Theresa did not feel herself privileged to show her displeasure at his presence, as it was sanctioned by her father, and as her own liberty of choice was not yet interfered with.

Joanna.—Well, by all that's lovely, I'll discriminate this mystery before I see Monday night. I'll make a cat or dog of it; and if Bryan is a deceiver, I'll deceive Tom Sweetman, that's all; he'll never kneel with me at the priest's table, if my turn was never to come. But something tells me that Bryan's heart is in the right place; by my *sonkies* I'll not rest till I have an equivocal explanation from him.

Theresa.—I will be much obliged, Joanna, by your not attempting such a thing. Would it not be as much as to show that we were seeking his society without any good will on his part?

Joanna.—I'll conservate both your dignity and sen-

sibility, but for all that I'll explore the veracity. And I'll take good care that we wont be confiscated by himself or that big porpoise of a Tom. Ah, poor Tom! Throth if I break your heart, I'd break my own after it; poor big slob! Many a weary walk he got day and night while I was in the sickness; and he cried down salt tears, as they told me when all was over, when he felt my forehead burning, and heard me raving about you, and Bryan, and himself." Here poor Joanna's tears were trickling down her cheeks, and her mistress found herself catching the contagion in spite of her efforts to the contrary.

In the evening Nicholas made a call, and was doing the agreeable as well as his chagrin at Joanna's return permitted. She saw through his plan well enough, and could perceive that Theresa's feelings had softened from a state of positive dislike into friendly indifference; and she resolved that this should not assume a warmer character, if it came within her own means to prevent it.

When the necessary scouring, and scrubbing, and brightening up, which always precedes Easter, was accomplished, and things were looking a little quiet, Joanna, whose voice was very sweet in giving the simple airs of the common ballads, raised the following song in her snug corner by the fire. It is very probable that the selection was not made without a design to put her young mistress on her guard against any hasty resolution with regard to her choice of a husband.

"THE FAITHLESS BRIDE.

"I was of late at a noble wedding,
The bridal of one that proved unkind
To him that loved her, but was forsaken;
But now his image filled her mind.

"Gay were the guests at that noble wedding,
And bright the beauty assembled there;
As lovely as the star of evening,
Or moonlight through the summer air.

"But there was also her slighted lover,
That day returned from the field of fight;
Great was his anger at the false bride,
Who should be his this wedding night.

"The wedding supper was now passed over,
And every guest was to sing a song:
The first that sung was the slighted lover;
The words to the false bride did belong.

"'How can you lie on a stranger's pillow,
You that have been my love so late;
And leave me here to wear the willow,
Pining in sorrow for your sake?

"'But if I wear this woful willow,
It will only be for a month or two;
And then I'll lay aside the willow,
And change the old love for the new.

"'Here is the piece of gold that was broken;
I kept it safe in a golden chain:
You gave it to me, a true-love token;
No more with me it shall remain.'"

"The bride, she sat at the head of the table;
Each word he sung she marked right well:
To bear it longer she was unable;
Down at the bridegroom's feet she fell.

"'A small request I have to offer,
This request I ask of you,
That I to-night may sleep with my mother,
To-morrow night I'll sleep by you.'

"This request at last was granted;
Sighing and sobbing she went to bed:
When they woke next morning early,
There they found the young bride dead.

"Now all young maids that hear this story,
To your vows be firm and true:
Don't be led by lands or money,
Nor change the old love for the new."

So at last came the bright Easter morn; and Peggy, and Pat, and others were out at sunrise on the top of a hillock, to see the sun dancing, just as he came above the rim of the earth. Those that did not care to face the bright orb with the naked eye, were content to look at its image in a tub of clean water. The breakfasts were prepared early at the two houses, eggs forming an additional luxury; and Edward, who had not been at home for a con-

siderable time, joined Bryan and his mother on their way to the chapel.

It was a delightful walk to Cloughbawn along through Colaght; the warmth arising from the power of the sun's rays being combined with the freshness from the shade of the trees skirting the road.

The ordinary life of the farming class at that period, and in that neighbourhood, was about the happiest that the compiler of this chronicle has ever witnessed, always taking for granted that their desires and tastes were in accordance with their condition. They had the varied operations of the different seasons to keep their minds and bodies healthily occupied; they had the evening's enjoyment of rest and chat; they had the Sunday for relaxation, for meeting their neighbours, and taking quiet walks through the soft field-paths, after they had devoted the early part of the day to devotion; and occasionally they had a walk or ride to Enniscorthy, to enjoy the variety of *town* life for two or three hours. Their rents were moderate, their landlord kind and indulgent, and they themselves able to lay up a trifle, year by year, for the future settlement of their children.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien and Theresa happened to join the Roche family at the bridge where the little stream from Forrestalstown opens out into the lake; and there was no means, without direct incivility, to avoid travelling in company on their way to Cloughbawn. So the usual greetings were made, and some constrained conversation went on. Theresa carefully avoided any opportunity of conversation with Bryan, and he on his part made no advances. Joanna was conversing with her young mistress, and if Bryan's ears had been sharp enough, he would have overheard the following dialogue.

Joanna.—Why then, Miss Theresa, alanna, how can you keep up this little spite and perversity to that *joiant* of a sweetheart of yours? I tell you, that if you saw him even courting another, you oughtn't to believe your own eyes. Did any one ever hear of a bad action of any kind he done, till dirty Sleeveen put his *comhether* on him, and got his spoon in betune you? Now you are as stubborn

as a mule and as proud as a paycock; and you will go with that conceited half sir of a Mac to the priest; and when you are fast by the nose, you'll find out that that poor big boy never loved any one but your own *ceann dhu*, and never kept *unproper* company in his life; and that the limb of the divel, Sleeveen, was only circumventing us all the time for a reason he has; and Master Nick will be *setting* up still with the family of the *Big House*, and dancing and singing for their amusement; and he'll come home disguised in drink, and hang his fiddle behind the door; and it's the cold shoulder and the black face he'll be showing to his galley-slave of a wife. Ah! dickens mend her, if she do be in a hurry to tie with her tongue what she can't open with her teeth.

Theresa.—Would it not be a little more proper to get up a discourse of another kind, or indeed get up no discourse at all, but think over the state of our souls, and how we do our duties?"

The speaker's thoughts and feelings were not in strict accordance with her words. Her lover's immediate presence flung its disturbing influence over her; or rather the heart of each was so filled with the other's image, and at the same time each was so conscious of the other's thoughts and feelings, that it was as if they kept up a voiceless but intelligible communion filled with sorrowful and affectionate complaints. Still when Bryan, sick of keeping up an appearance of indifference, would throw a backward glance upon her dear figure, the face would be cast down or turned aside, though she had the instant before been furtively scanning the form so dear to her still, in spite of its owner's supposed infidelity.

Joanna resumes.—Well, glory be to God: He is stronger than the old one even with Sleeveen to help him; and if I was to wear my old pumps to the welts, I'll serenade the barony of Bantry over, or find out the root of the *villiany*. Ah! here comes good-natured Peggy Donovan and her husband from Enniscorthy, and little Harry along with them; I suppose they want to give themselves one real holiday. Ach! how could Peggy that spent three quarters of her life out in the open air, and never was shut up in a

close room, except when she was in school, bear to be imprisoned in that little meal and butter shop in Market-street with her husband!"—"Would she bear it better, do you think, without her husband?"—"Ah, don't take us up till we're down! Now, please goodness, I'll find out something that will throw light on the Enniscorthy doings."

That morning when starting for Mass, I had the pleasure of joining my old school-fellow, Miss Margaret Donovan that was, but now Mrs. Marcus Kavanagh. Our proper destination was Courtnacuddy, but both parties were desirous of meeting our friends in common, the Roches and O'Briens, at Cloughbawn. I overtook them on the hill above Och-na-Goppal, and Mrs. Kavanagh and I went over our school life with Mr. and Mrs. Bowers. Peggy was as handsome and as innocent a young country girl as ever I saw. She was tall, and her features were redolent of artlessness and content. I never saw the trace of a sulky or evil expression on them during years of acquaintanceship. Her countenance gave you the sensation of the taste of a sweet apple saved from being insipid by a very slight dash of acid; for Peggy was arch as well as cheerful, and if ever there was an innocent rogue she was one. Her husband was a plain plodding man of business, about an inch shorter than his wife, for my dear old playfellow was very tall for a woman.

We enjoyed our walk up the sheltery road of Glanmuin, and had the pleasure of meeting our friends at the cross of Colaght. I should have before stated that Peggy and her husband were on an Easter visit at her father's, whose house adjoined the stony lane that connected Courtnacuddy with the village and deserted mine-works of Kaim.

When the first confused and fragmentary greetings were over, and every body had kissed or shaken hands with every other body, according as age, sex, or circumstances permitted, Peggy joined Theresa, and poured out a stream of questions and information; and every moment her hearty laugh would fling rays of sprightliness round us all. While her own exuberant gaiety communicated itself in different degrees to every one, she took no notice of any sadness, for

she looked at every one through the medium of her own happy temperament; but when this outpouring of pleasant spirits had somewhat calmed down, she took notice of Bryan's restrained air and Theresa's melancholy. To see anything disagreeable in her way, and not endeavour to remove it, was out of the question; so she began to ask very embarrassing questions, just after we had passed Mr. Watt Greene's gate, and had shaken hands with Martha, and Richard, and Becky, and enquired about the little *ram* and her young ones, and got a slap for our impudence; for poor Rebecca had been roasted over and over about the same unlucky queen of birds. We were now too near the chapel to enter on a list of grievances; so Peggy strove to stifle her impatience; and after entering the little house of worship, we endeavoured, not very successfully, to bring our thoughts and feelings to a tone more in unison with the solemn act of worship in which we were about to join.

What a variety in attitude and expression might be witnessed during the celebration of Mass, and in a confined space of the same chapel! Here the lazy, indevout Sleeveen, kneeling on one knee, mumbling a prayer now and then, listlessly staring around him, and the whole air of the man saying so plainly, "I wish it was all over:" there, Pat and Peggy reading the prayers for the bare life, and looking up every now and then for fear the priest might have got before them in the liturgy. Joanna is also diligently reading her *Gahan's Catholic Piety*, and giving a vigorous thump to her well-meaning bosom now and then, but letting her eye wander involuntarily at times to where Tom Sweetman is pursuing his devotions under the same difficulties. Theresa, Bryan, and the rest were all seemingly very intent on following the course of the service in their *Keys*, or *Pietys*, or *Manuals*, with all the diligence and devotion they could muster. If their attention momentarily wandered, they soon recalled the truant, and strove to make up for the neglect by renewed fervour.

Mr. Roche and some of his class had no need of keeping watch over their senses. Owing to a long settled habit of devout abstraction of their minds from outward objects, their souls were wrapt in one act of adoration from begin-

ning to end of the Mass. Zealous souls of this kind feel by anticipation a slight foretaste of future bliss in freedom from distraction, and undisturbed contemplation of passages of the life of the Saviour, or other subjects of meditation.

We are again on the return homeward, the children rejoicing in a chase after each other to restore their limbs to their usual state after the hour's forced inaction.

Mrs. Kavanagh was not long about securing the attention of Theresa and her mother, and inquiring the cause of the coolness between the families, and of the young people being so intent on avoiding each other. Theresa was too confused or too much affected to give her a clear answer; but her mother, after a little hesitation, mentioned Sleeveen's information on the evening of the collation in Back-lane. "Oh, the lying serpent!" said Peggy, "and have you let the words of such a liar as Sleeveen outweigh your own knowledge of the innocence of Bryan's past life? You simpletons! the woman that gave this terrible message was no other than myself; and it was chiefly about him bringing some corn to us next market day." The women, with flushed cheeks and throbbing bosoms wavering between hope and fear, mentioned then the particulars of the alleged message and the threatened visit to Castleboro.

Mrs. Kavanagh.—Well, to be sure! If Sleeveen is not a good dish-maker he is a capital turner. I suppose you know Biddy Foley that lives in Moneytummer." "We know there is such a person, but that's all." "She lived with us a couple of years since, and not being satisfied with good bread and payment for eating it, she married a young labouring man of the town. Things did not go on to their wishes after marriage, till at last he got a situation as caretaker, or yard clerk, or some such office, at Mr. Sparrow's in the Shannon; but he was obliged to be night and day on the premises. Poor Biddy was soon in a condition when she could do little for herself in town, and she has now been at home for some time with her mother in Moneytummer, nursing her child. The message that was so neatly twisted by Sleeveen was one that I really gave to Michael Redmond, who was to tell Bryan, when he would be passing by his house, to let Biddy know that the

husband was so anxious to see herself and the child, that even if he was to lose his place, he would come out to see them, unless they took an opportunity to come in some early market day by Bryan's car."

"Oh, mother," sobbed Theresa, "why did we not make closer enquiries before we shewed all that coldness? And now I suppose the young woman that has been seen by Joanna at Gurrawn, and by others since, must be the poor young mother." "To be sure she is. Bryan never left town without something from her good man, and sometimes a relish from ourselves; she was a good loyal creature: I suppose that the visits were remarked on as mostly happening on Fridays. Oh, dear! If I was allowed to have two husbands, I'd run off with Bryan this minute to punish you for a pair of ninnyhammers. But are you sure you are not contracted to that pompous sly-boots of a Mac Cracken? If you are, all I say is, don't take the trouble of inviting me to the wedding."

Mrs. O'Brien.—No, thank God, she is not. Though we were in a sad way enough for Bryan's misconduct as we thought it, and though the other has never ceased in his attentions to Theresa, he has got nothing from her yet but cold civility. Once or twice he lost temper almost, and mentioned the reports about Bryan; but he gained nothing by his ill-nature. You may guess, Peggy dear, that it will be an embarrassing thing for either of us to go up to Bryan, and ask pardon for giving credit so easily to the lying reports: so I believe we must draw on your good-nature to do another kind turn for us." "Never say it twice," said Mrs. Kavanagh; and without delay she approached the group of men, and taking Bryan by the arm she asked him with a smile if he would venture to walk a few perches with her; "for my husband is very prone to jealousy, especially when any of my old school-fellows are in question." "Oh, dear! what a value we set on ourselves!" said Marcus. "If Mr. Roche took you off my hands altogether, it would be the saving of many a stone of meal and pound of butter in the year, given away in tillies. Bryan, you will be saddled soon enough with your own lawful wedded tyrant. I can't afford to be jealous:

so go and talk as long as you like : you need not be at the expense of much of the conversation; my good woman will bear five quarters of it : so fire away."

Ah! what a tide of sweet and tumultuous joy was dancing through Bryan's veins in a few minutes! as Peggy (with great caution *for her*) was unfolding the web by which the minds of the two women had been blindfolded. She did not criminate any one by name, but Bryan easily guessed who were the plotters and workers of the contrivance. At present his heart had room only for grateful and joyful feelings; and by some simple manœuvring Peggy and he soon strayed over to Theresa and her mother. Very little was said, and that little with some restraint, as there had not been as yet any formal declaration; but loving hands soon found each other out, and affectionate looks were interchanged; and sunshine once more lighted up the chambers of their souls, so lately darkened by the gloomy vapours of distrust and estrangement.

Mr. O'Brien was sensible of things so progressing as to work his disappointment, and do him serious ill by the upsetting of his cherished design. Hence he made frequent attempts to break up the hostile groups by intruding his unwelcome presence among them; but most of his fellow-wayfarers had some inkling of the turn things were taking, and by tacit consent a coalition was organised, and Mr. O'Brien found that so simple a thing as joining the group of women was not to be effected. Some favourite topic of his own was started; some question required his help in order to be solved, or some jibe was launched at those uxorious people, who could not be happy unless when fastened to their wives' apron-strings. With distracted thoughts he pretended to take interest in the current discussions; but at last, when he caught the unwelcome sight of the joining of hands, he broke through all the rules of etiquette as known in these remote regions, and joined the group.

His proceedings were judicious in fact, but very useless. The estranged hearts once more beat in sympathy, and their owners could afford to observe silence towards each other; their souls enjoyed a mystical communion, and their walk home was a joyous waking trance.

Mrs. Roche's high spirit had hitherto prevented her from making any advances towards cordiality with the O'Briens, or even attempts at an explanation; besides, she dreaded a lapse into roughness of language, for her temper was a little inflammable, as perhaps has been already hinted. Her open-hearted, generous disposition was so much in her way in appreciating O'Brien's close and tortuous disposition, that the motives of his actions were perfectly incomprehensible to her, and she felt no real resentment towards him; but it was a different matter with the women. She was thoroughly persuaded of their unselfish characters, and could not make a guess at the cause of their sudden coldness to Bryan. And now her curiosity was great, both to discover the cause of the late coldness, and the present puzzling reconciliation. Herself and husband, and the other family, and the Kavanaghs, now intermingled; and after some failures the conversation assumed an interesting character. It might be likened to the regular pouring of water from a jar, after the first few irregular gushes. Mr. O'Brien only was out of humour, and he closely watched every opportunity of throwing a chill on the agreeable and lively conversation.

Peggy had many inquiries to make after her former companions and school-fellows, and in the glow of her good humour and gaiety, the hearts of the company felt drawn to each other, as some substances are brought within the influence of each other's attraction by the agency of the liquid in which they are infused.

The return formed a pleasant contrast with the going out in the morning. That walk had the same agreeabilities arising from fair weather, a fine shaded road, pleasant views of the great fields on the side of Tomanearly and Tinnock, the little wood rising from the stream, the castles old and new, and the spreading lawns and lakes; but the present stroll had in addition the charm of the reconciliation of two true and affectionate hearts. The Kavanaghs and H. W. parted from them at Colaght, but not until we were bound by solemn promise to spend Monday evening at Edward's, where the two families would be assembled.

We had a pleasant walk on that evening from Courtnacuddy to Castleboro bridge. As we went, we conversed on the happiness that was likely to ensue from the fortunate meeting of Mrs. Kavanagh and Theresa, and we unconsciously connected this pleasant subject with the beauty of the evening, the hazy, soft sides of the White Mountain and Blackstairs, the emerald green of the castle lawns and meadows, so beautifully relieved by the darker hues of the trees and their broad shadows cast on the sward. Mrs. Kavanagh mentioned that fine views in fine weather seemed to her much finer on Sundays and holidays than on working days; and Charles Redmond supposed that on weekdays our minds being occupied with cares of some kind, had no time to dwell on these common delights or derive any enjoyment from them; but as we have not our mental dwellings closed on Sundays, we leave our senses, which act as doors and windows, open to all the agreeable impressions arising from sights, and sounds, and odours.

We found mother, and daughter, and Joanna, and another girl milking the cows in the paddock adjoining the farm-house; and Bryan, and Tom, and now Charley were officiously giving their assistance, or rather hindering the operation. Alas! we call up before our mental vision the image of a fair, good country girl milking her cows on a fine summer evening, with her intended husband pretending to keep the animal quiet, which, all the time, wishes for nothing better than to be relieved of her temporary incumbrance, and to enjoy the pleasant task of chewing her cud. We pause with pleasure on the recollection of this group, and looking out in the street in the dusk of the evening, in this our comparatively moral city of Dublin, we catch a sight of dissipated young rascals reeling along, and holding such conferences with gaudily-dressed, and laughing, but wretched creatures, who once were the pride of their parents—holding such converse with them as devils delight to hear; and we think of the amount of wickedness heaped up in the twenty-four hours even in this the most moral and religious city of its size, perhaps, in the world.

When milking is over, we of the rougher make are invited to bear a hand in fastening up the cows in their *bales*,

and to distribute hay to themselves and the horses. We fasten up the cows, and repair to the haggard; and Edward, getting on the lower platform of the hayrick, cuts with a knife, whose handle is at right angles with the blade, a strand of hay—pressing on the haft, and forcing the blade downwards in continuation of the upright section already made. While doing so, he proceeds at our request to enlighten us on the present position of his affairs :—

"Now, friends, Romans, and lovers, the year of probation has nearly expired. I have prepared a temporary home for my bride; and I recommend any very lazy person in my circumstances to calculate his endurance of fatigue, and anxiety, and uncertainty before he brings such a responsibility on himself. You may suppose that out of my school emoluments I have been able to lay by but little; and as I have gone entirely contrary to my father's wishes in my choice of a profession, and as his love of money is, to say the least, very sincere, I do not expect much from his generosity. You know my disinclination to steady labour of any kind; but I am sure you would give me very great praise if you could have witnessed my exertions during the last month."

Charles.—Like most persons of active minds, you are a model of bodily laziness. When you are really obliged, you are very diligent for a time, but see how soon you resign yourself to sloth when you no longer feel the spur. Go on.

Edward.—You would give me some credit if you could have seen me making the chimney in our little home. Yes, my boys, I had no choice of a tenement. One was cut out for me from its locality, and as belonging to the little bit of land I have taken; and the labourers being all busy with the spring work, I fixed the chimney-wattles in the mantel-beam, wove them well with stout briars, and plastered the inner surface with tough mortar. I have left myself bare enough with purchasing the necessary furniture, and sowing a pretty patch of potatoes, at which I wrought like any clodhopper; and the week after next I hope to be lord of a happy little home, with my loved and loving little wife converting it into a paradise by her pre-

sence. How delightful it will be to wait on her, and welcome her to her future home! And then to feel that your bother and worry is over, and that you wont be pestered brushing your clothes, nor reckoning your things for the wash; but that you have a careful head and loving heart to relieve you of these domestic annoyances.

Bryan.—And what do your people think of all this?

Edward.—That's the most unpleasant part of the business. My father has ceased to take much interest in my welfare; and when my mother mentioned the matter, he was very tart on her; said 'that it was her indulgence and desire to give me a taste for reading that spoiled me, and left me unfit for steady business; and that I need expect no help from him as I never followed his advice.' He does not seem to like to hear anything more about it; and I do not know whether I shall inform him of my marriage till it is over. I cannot persuade my mother or Theresa to feel anything like the love for Eliza that I could wish. They say it is about the most foolish thing I could have done—to bind myself to a hasty marriage, myself and my wife being both so young and so poor; and that unless for the goodness of God alone, I may expect an uncomfortable and trying time of married life, when I find that I have brought a soft young creature under such responsibilities as will naturally follow the step; especially when I see her in sorrow, and privations, and trouble, and find myself cut off from every chance of advancement. As I entered on a solemn engagement with Eliza they could not think of my breaking this engagement, but they are very much cast down about the probable result. They said at first that the acquaintance was too slight to justify so speedy a betrothal; but as there cannot be a drawback now on my part with either honour or honesty, they only encourage me to diligence, and pray that everything may turn out better than their expectations.

"After some of these conferences, I feel terribly dismal; and I have sometimes lain on my back on the sod for hours, with my brain seething, and my ideas, instead of arising naturally one from the other, chasing each other in and out, as I have seen bits of colours in the exhibition of a

magic lantern. In these moments of turmoil I sometimes fancy that affection has completely disappeared from my heart; but when the storm is past, then I always find it again; and when I see my betrothed next, and take her soft hand in my own, and she turns to me with her large loving eyes, I feel these misgivings no more than I could bring on a shivering fit on a hot summer's day by thinking on the frost of last winter.

Bryan.—I am going to forestall my expected brotherly privileges by telling you what I am afraid will prove your worst enemy through life if you don't overcome it in time. You are about the most impatient of any person I ever knew. When any long, dull, regular business has to be done, or when you are obliged to wait any length of time for some expected good, you act like one of those little boys, who, instead of coming quietly down a staircase, step by step, shoot down the bannister rail at the risk of breaking their necks. Maybe its the great number of story-books that you have read, that makes the common things of life round you appear so dull and tiresome. When you have no lively story to feed your imagination, you look out for some exciting thing in real life to occupy your thoughts and affections.

Redmond.—I think, Bryan, that you are putting the car before the horse. In my opinion, it is the restless craving for some novelty or excitement that has made Ned so fond of hunting out story books and novels, instead of the books producing the restlessness. The poor fellow was leading a humdrum life, teaching little children how '*An—old—man, — one—day, —found—a—rude—boy—in—one — of his—trees,—stealing—apples, &c.,*' for eight or nine hours a day; and besides, he had no companions of sympathetic taste: in fact, there was a big void in his head and heart, and the comely young lady filled both at once in a very refreshing manner. Well, well; let us not halloo till we are out of the wood ourselves: Ned cannot say, at all events, that we are neglecting to use the privileges of friends.

Edward.—Indeed I think you are not only using, but abusing them into the bargain. Wait. When you have

passed an evening or two at our little fireside, I will have some curiosity to know if your present opinions suffer no change. Come, come: bear a hand, and help me with this hay into the stable-loft, and we will sit down there for a while, and consider the subject more at our ease than here.

The door of the stable-loft was on a level with the grassy floor of the haggard, and so we had only to walk in with our loads. Immediately after, Sleeveen, who had been lying perdu in the other side of the very rick we were employed on during this conversation, left his cozy resting place, entered the stable, and concealed himself behind a barrel and some loose planks. Hiding places in hay-ricks are scooped out by country boys of a mischievous and comfort-loving turn. They are delightful little bowers when the weather is sharp, as there are materials at hand to stop the entrance, and make it as warm as a nest.

When we were lying at our ease on the hay, after filling the rack, Edward resumed his confidences, which, together with the amendments and remarks of the others, will appear at a more suitable stage of this history. Towards the conclusion, the voice of Joanna was heard outside in the yard: "Mr. Edward, and Bryan, and Charley, and any body else, are you there if yez please?"

Charles.—And if we don't please to be here, what then, Joanna?

Joanna—Nothing, but that you won't get the least *scrimshin* of the nice hot cake. The *tay accapagement* and the new *traynor* are all deranged; and if you stay there *shanaching* you won't have the *fecility* of getting one dawny cup from the young mistress's white hands; and I suppose some of yez don't love the same white hands with the taper fingers. Don't hurry yourselves: Sleeveen, and Pat Neil, and myself will be able for all that's left.

Here there was a noise of feet on the loft, all briskly shuffling towards the door; and Joanna, dreading an invasion, took to her heels, and got in before them. The evening's business commenced; and the reader may fancy at his or her pleasure an accompaniment of tea-pouring, sugar-filling, cake-buttering, and cake-demolishing, along with sly jokes, and pressing, and all the other apparatus.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A DISCOURSE ON TASTE.

THE master of the house was tolerably at his ease, notwithstanding the late defeat, as Sleeveen had taken an opportunity of whispering to him, as he was crossing the yard, that he was now convinced of Bryan's double dealing, and had it again in his power to damage his cause, from what he had just heard passing between himself and another or two. "Master," said he, "do you only take care that Mr. Edward won't have any private conversation with the young mistress before he sets out to-morrow for his school; and if he sends her any message before Friday next, see that she doesn't get it; and if we don't settle Mr. Bryan's hash, I'll give you leave to call me a fool. Ah, masther! I'm afeard I've brought the ill will of the two families down on my back, and my old bones is getting very stiff, and to please you, masther honey, I went in this last business a little beyond the bounds of the bare truth, though it wasn't at all the invintion they said it was; and there's a station at Art Curran's in Tomanearly next week, and maybe it would be betther for me to think of makin' me sowl. It's ten years since I was at a priest's knee, and I'll have a hard job of it. And what good would the acre of land and the ten guineas be to me an' I in every one's mouth, and no one speaking a word to me, or darkening the door of my little cabin to come in and have a friendly bit of talk of a long evening?" Mr. O'Brien guessed very well the real object of this speech, and managed to appease Sleeveen's scruples with a little trouble.

So the master of the house, relying on Sleeveen's resources, was rather social than otherwise this evening. He could not, to be sure, afford to indulge in pleasant discourse himself, or smile at the attempts of others in that line; but he did not directly snap at any one, nor did he interfere when he saw any signs of friendly intelligence between Theresa and Bryan. However, he thought within himself, on these occasions, "Maybe we won't put a bar between you, my fine people, before a week goes by."

Apropos to Mrs. O'Brien making an apology for some imaginary defect in the entertainment, Charles uttered a wish that no one in company might ever have worse fare before them; adding, "I have often wished, ma'am, to see a king or a great lord benighted at one of our places, and see how he'd handle his knife and fork, and how he would relish the fare we could give him."

Mrs. O'Brien.—Hunger is good sauce, Charley; and while his hunger lasted he would like it well enough. The great Ram of Gorey was once out a-hunting, and the long chace ended at last in Monamolin, there above Coolbawn. When the excitement was over, he felt as hungry as a hunter; and the first cabin he met he alighted, and going in he bade 'God save all here' like any common man, and asked the woman of the house 'if she could give him any thing to eat.' ''Deed,' says the poor woman, 'I have not a thing under the roof I could offer your honor but a mug of *prapeen.*' 'Well, well, let me have the prāpeen in the name of Goodness; it is the first time I ever heard of it.' So he watched her while she filled a large mug nearly with milk, and spilled as much oaten-meal out of a crock in the cupboard as she thought would answer, and then mixed all with a horn spoon. When it was ready she wiped the outside of the mug with her apron, and presented it to the gentleman with many apologies. He immediately popped his spoon into the mixture, and swallowed the full of it with much relish; and after a few mouthfulls he cried, 'How is it that I have lived so long without ever getting a taste of this delicious treat, or even hearing the name of it?' Well, he finished his collation, and when he was laying the mug back on the dresser he slipped a Spanish dollar into it, and then thanked the poor woman over and over, and said that if ever he came that way again he would trouble her for another mug of the mixture.

"When he got home he could talk of nothing but his new discovery; and he worked so much on the minds of the ladies and gentlemen that were on a visit, and on his own lady and family, that they all felt some curiosity about it. So at breakfast-time next morning, he made the

cook bring up a bowl of the stuff made after his own directions. Spoons were furnished to the company, and all introduced their weapons into the bowl, and began to taste the new delicacy very gingerly. 'Ah, what epicures you all are!' said the great Ram himself; 'swallow it like people of good taste.' Well, they did their best, but with very little pleasure to themselves, but then it would not become well-bred people to be making faces before company; so some of the delicate ladies suffered a trifle. 'Dear me,' said the master, 'how squeamish people are! (he used nicer language than that, but the meaning was the same)—how squeamish we are,' says he: 'give me a spoon.' So he took a good bit, and looked very foolish, striving to get it down.

"He then wiped his mouth, drank off a cup of tea, and rang for the cook. 'Ma'am,' said he to her, 'what have you put into this villainous hasty-pudding?' 'The best new milk and oatenmeal, please your honor,' says she: 'ask the butler and dairy-maid if you like.' He looked her full in the face, but there wasn't the shadow of a lie on it. I do not know what he did next. Some of us would have shaken our heads, and looked puzzled; at any rate, he paused, and while every one was striving not to laugh, he looked briskly round and cried out, 'Oh! I see how it is: my entertainer used a *delf* mug and a horn spoon. I suppose there is no spoon of horn in the house; take away the dish. I engage, though, that if any of you follow the hunt with me to the same place, and call at my little woman's again, you will find that I did not praise her entertainment a bit more than it deserved."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

INEDITED MEMOIRS OF DEAN SWIFT.

At this point Joanna became spokeswoman. "I *dunna* was the Ram you spoke of the same that tossed Dean Swift into the ditch one day. I heard some one telling once, that the Dean was driving along quietly in his gig, when the great Ram was coming by, with his carriage and six

horses; and the road was so narrow that the Dean's poor little equipage was pitched into the dyke. When he recovered himself, he asked who done it, and when he was told, he said it was a burning shame that

> "England's pride and Ireland's glory
> Should be thrown in the ditch by the big Ram of Gorey."

Mrs. O'Brien.—Many queer things are told of the same Dean Swift and his boy. It is said the first time they met, the boy was minding pigs along the side of the road. 'Who owns these *bonyeens*, my brave boy?' said the Dean. 'Their mother, please your reverence,' was the answer. 'Ah, ha! and may I ask who is your own father?' 'To be sure, sir: only mind the pigs for me till I run in, and ask my mother.' Well, the Dean laughed heartily, and went on. Some time after, as he was sitting in his study, in walked the same boy with a salmon by the gills. He laid it across the Dean's lap, and said his father sent it to him. 'Ah, my boy!' said the Dean, 'it is a pity that your father has not taught you better manners. Sit down here, and I will show you how to act next time.' So the boy sat down in the Dean's chair, while himself went out of the room with the fish in his hand. He tapped, and the boy bade him come in. When he entered he saw the urchin with his rabbit-skin cap still stuck on his head, a book in one hand, and the Dean's spectacles on his nose. Well, the Dean thought this too much of a good thing, but he did not *let on*. He took off his hat, made a genteel bow, and said, 'My father has sent me with this fish, hoping your reverence will please to accept it.' 'Oh, very good,' said the lad, looking at the Dean over his spectacles; 'I am much obliged to your father: he is a worthy man, and you are a smart, good boy. Here is half a crown for you; take the salmon to the kitchen, and tell the cook that I wish her to give you your dinner.' 'Oh, the young thief!' said the Dean to himself: 'how neatly he has walked down my back! Catch me giving him another lesson in politeness.' However, he found the boy to be trustworthy and honest, though he was crafty and arch, and he made him his servant.

"One morning, as they were setting out on a journey, he found his boots unpolished; and all the excuse the boy made was, 'that there was no use polishing them, as they would be as dirty as ever before night.' The master made no remark; but when breakfast hour was past, and the boy reminded him that it was time to get something to eat, he answered, 'What's the use in breaking our fast? we would be as hungry as ever before night:' so the boy was conquered this time at his own weapons. He said nothing, however, but rode on silently after his master.

"After some time, another traveller came up, and began to converse with the boy; and he asked him 'who was his master.' 'Sure,' said he, 'it's the great Dean Swift.' 'And where are you going, if it's a fair question?' 'To be sure it is: we are going to heaven.' 'By my word, I never knew before that this road led in that direction.' 'Well, I'm sure I wish you could point out a better: my master is praying, and I am fasting.' So the Dean, who was listening with all his ears, though he pretended to be reading, took care to turn into the first house of entertainment they met, and order a good breakfast for both.

"They say that he turned him off one time for getting drunk: and though he could get a great reward from Government if he chose to inform on some of his master's writings, and though the Dean refused him any assistance when he was nearly starved, he still held out most loyally. So when the Dean was out of danger, the first thing he did was to bring back his faithful follower, and they never again quitted one another till death parted them. As a token of his attachment, he got his servant's tomb settled between his own and the wall, inside of St. Patrick's Church."

Mr. Roche.—I believe, ma'am, we have not got that part of the story right, at all events. Wherever their bodies lie, their monuments are not near each other. There is a flag fastened to the wall, inside of a bye-entrance into the church, in memory of William Magee, the Dean's faithful servant. The first things I looked for, once when I was at

Dublin, were the monuments of the Dean and his man. The Dean's own statue, as far down as his breast, is at some distance up in the wall. I stood a long time looking at it: there was a very heavy stern look about it, but the epitaph was in Latin, and I wasn't scholar enough to make out the sense.

Joanna.—They say when the Dean was dying, he bethought himself of becoming a Catholic. So he told the minister that was attending him, that he was dying in peace with all the world except one Popish priest, and him he could not forgive. The minister then told him, as it was only right he should, that he must forgive every one, friend and enemy, or he could not get entrance into heaven.' 'That's a hard case,' says the Dean; 'and such things as he done to me! Well, well: if I must, I must: send for him: he's Father So-and-So of Dirty-lane chapel.' And so the priest came, and the minister waited in an outside room, till at last he thought they were too long together: so getting uneasy he pushed in the door, and what did he see but the priest anointing the sick man. 'Oh, you impostor,' says he, 'if ever you rise out of that, I'll make a holy show of you.' 'And if ever I do,' says the other, tart enough, 'I'll have your gown pulled off your shoulders for bringing a Popish priest to a dying man that's not strong in his mind.' Edward having read more than Joanna, hinted that this need not be considered the stark naked truth, as the poor Dean had been an idiot for some time before his death, in the very hospital he himself had founded [He died in the Deanery in Kevin-street]; but the new light this circumstance threw on the subject was not received with much gratitude.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"FISH (AND OTHER) TATTLE."

THERE was a short interval allowed for meditation on these recovered passages of Irish biography, after which Mrs. Roche took up the theme: "The Dean's salmon reminds me of the laziness of our own men and boys. Seldom we

see a big salmon-trout, much less a salmon. Not *all as one* as the family of Daniel F., the luckiest fisherman from Grange to Moneytucker."

Charles.—Poor Dan! Many a day I watched him flinging up dozens of fine fat trouts out of the Boro, with his poor little fishing-rod of ozier, and equally poor line of cow or horsehair, while gentlemen with varnished utensils, wheels, cat-gut, and every convenience of the nicest kind, could not get the ghost of a bite. I beg pardon, Mrs. Roche, for interrupting you. What about Dan?

Mrs. Roche.—Daniel once caught a fine basket of fish, and brought them up to the castle; they were always fond of fresh fish at the castle; whatever is the reason, Protestants are fonder of fish than Catholics. So Daniel brought up the trouts, and the young ladies came about him to admire the nice colours in their scales; and says one of the ladies to Dan: 'Mr. F.,' says she, 'how does it happen that you are more lucky than the gentlemen, let them have ever such fine tackle?' 'Musha, lady, avourneen,' says he, 'myself doesn't know, if it isn't that the poor trouts knows that the gentlemen can do better without them than a poor man like me.'

"Well, the trouts were taken away, and Miss Carew went and brought, with her own nice, pearly-looking hands, some slices of bread and butter and a cup of tea to Dan. About a month before he had got another cup of tea from the same young lady; the sugar-bowl was laid beside it, and his entertainer merely said, 'Mr. F., sweeten it to your liking,' or some words with the same meaning. Daniel not being used to this sort of refreshment, did not put in any sugar, but drank it off without a sour look, thinking that if it was bitter itself, it might be wholesome. On the second occasion, while preparing to swallow the dose, he innocently asked the name of the beverage. 'This is green tea, Daniel,' said she.' So he pulled up resolution, took a slice of bread and butter, and putting the cup to his lips, prepared to toss it off at a gulp. This time the tea was sweetened beforehand, and Dan's tongue giving him notice of the agreeable taste of tea, cream, and

sugar, he drank it off very leisurely, smacked his lips, laid down the cup, and cried out in a tone of comfort and gratitude, 'Ah, Miss, jewel! God give you a happy death! Gramachree was *green tay*, but to the dickens with *sweeten it to your liking!*"

Joanna is busy bustling about and attending, but joins in the discourse when she chooses. "Ah, Mrs. Roche, how stories does gather moss, not the same as the stone that's always rowling; that's not the way I *heard* it at all. Miss Carew brought the cup and saucer in her own hands, just as you said, and held them out to Daniel, and he all the time trembling out of shyness, and shaking as if he had the ague in his fingers. So he *cotch* the tay-cup by the handle, and the lady thought he was going to ketch the saucer with his left hand, that was fumbling about without knowing what to do. So she let go the saucer, and Dan did not take it, and down it came on the flagged hall, and was made *brishe* of in a minute. 'Daniel,' says she, 'which of us is the awkward person?' 'Oh, ma'am,' says poor Dan, 'I beg forty pardons, but I vow to goodness, that I thought the *scauldeen* was stuck to the *platter*.'

Charles.—Mr. F. was likely enough to do an awkward thing, but I think I heard the same stories before; but it wasn't at Castleboro at all that they happened, if my informer is right; let Mrs. Roche, and Joanna, and himself settle it between them. But what I am going to tell you is as true as that Sleeveen would eat Joanna with a grain of salt. The same young lady was walking one day in the meadow below the old garden in the shade of the large trees, and Dan was fishing on the other side, and he wasn't long about throwing up a fine tempting trout. 'I wish, ma'am,' says he, shouting across the river, 'I could throw this fellow over to you, but if I did, it would be injured.' 'Thank you, Mr. F.,' said she; 'I will try to pitch a handkerchief over to you to wrap it in.' '*Sha gu dhein*, Miss; that's the very thing, but if you don't put something inside, it will never cross; put in a stone.' 'There is no stone hereabouts, but maybe a half-crown will do as well.' 'Oh, madam, that would be barefaced robbery.'

'Not at all, Mr. F.; look out;' and the handkerchief and half-crown dropped at Dan's feet at the edge of a little pool. Dan soon sent the trout to the other side, but kept looking at the ground very diligently. 'What is the matter, Mr. F.? I hope the silver is not lost.' 'Oh, don't take any trouble about it, Miss, maybe it will be got; and how sorry I am that you should be so generous!' Still the poking went on, and still he exhorted his patroness not to trouble herself. At last she folded a fellow coin in the same handkerchief which Daniel had flung back to her, and when it was about half way across, Dan made a duck, and shouted out, 'Oh, I see where the thief is hid; thank you, Miss,' and just then the new comer hit him on the nose. 'Now, ma'am, *will* I put the two half-crowns in the handkerchief, and throw them back?' 'Indeed you shall not, unless you wish to offend me.' 'Ah, Miss, if there was twenty half-crowns in it, I would not throw them over if I thought it would offend. God break all hard fortune before yourself and all belonging to you!'

During part of these recreations I happened to sit between the "affianced," and began to wish for another locality. I am sure their wishes were in unison, and to effect the desirable object I cried out, "Mr. Kavanagh, will you allow me a seat next your lady, till we talk for the tenth time of our school-days together?"

Marcus.—Here is my own for you; I'll take one near Mr. O'Brien, and have some sensible talk with him. I think a more useless budget of nonsense I never listened to before in my life; meaning no offence." The change was effected, and the youth and maid seemed ill at ease for ten seconds.

So we discoursed about Mr. and Mrs. Bowers, and their little cabbage-garden on the edge of the Ross road incumbered with hollyhocks, and Mr. Bowers himself sitting on his chair, with eyes half closed, and a perpetual simper on his face, declaiming against the time lost in learning grammar, and lauding arithmetic and neat handwriting to the skies (he knew *Foster* and *Gough* as well as any teacher in Ireland), and crying out when the pupils were a thought too noisy, "Silence, you little dogs."

What a fine hand was our old master at a flourish, and how neatly was his favourite phrase, MULTUM IN PARVO, written and encircled by birds' wings, or ingenious curls that did duty for them! The grateful H. W. descanted on the slight wear and tear to which the rod was subject; and Mrs. Kavanagh praised the gentle, subdued manner of the mistress, and her care in teaching reading, the use of the needle, aye, and the catechism itself, to the Catholic children, herself being a sincere Protestant. "I never heard her make a remark on the catechism or prayers but once, and that was on the subject of *The Act of Charity.* She walked up and down the floor several times one day at play-hour, when there were only a few pupils present, and repeated more than once, "Oh how can any one say with truth, 'I love thee, O my God, with my whole heart, and above all things, and my neighbour as myself for thy sake.' I would be afraid to repeat what I do not feel." Some pupils said that we are only required to raise our hearts to God to the utmost of our power, when repeating the words; but her fears were not overcome.

The teacher of Cloughbawn school, Mr. Moran, made a vile doggrel about our master, and we were as vexed as we could be; for all were attached to the simple, well-disposed, kind man. I repeated part of it to my literary patron, Paddy Quigly, the weaver in Tomenine; and I gratified the master shortly after, by giving him my friend's answer to the attack. I can only remember the first two verses:—

"Last Saturday evening I met in my rounds
A poem that occasioned much laughter—
A lampoon adjacent unto the *Stone Pound*,
That was made by some poor poetaster.

"The scurrilous language this author did use
Was most unbecoming a man;
The name of the critic who gave the abuse
I'm informed was Michael Moran."

Whatever may be thought of the quality of the poetry, the spirit of it had such an effect on the poor master, who was a fairish poet himself, that he walked in his nearly blind state, through fields and along lanes, from his place

near Clonroche, till he reached Tomenine, and all merely to return thanks to his disinterested champion.

Ah, how delightful were the evenings, as we all, including handsome Peggy Donovan, ran and chased each other through the pleasant meadows that lay between the school and Tomanearly. But we wont take up the evening with our own selfish recollections. The dean's salmon lugged in Daniel's trout, and H. W. related a couple of adventures of his own, when he was in the habit of angling with unfortunate earthworms. He never attained to the knowledge of flies.

H. W.—I was once fishing just where Daniel held the lucky conference with the lady; and instead of a trout I pulled up a strange line and hook from the bottom of the river; but I had not angled fifteen minutes after this haul, when I lost my own tackle in the boughs of one of the trees that overhang the bed of the stream. Another time I was fishing under the wood just opposite Mr. Tom Whitney's, and threw up a trout. The bank of that place is considerably higher than the stony bed of the river; and, as you all know, there is a pretty broad flat of brushwood and tall dry grass along to the bottom of the hill. The trout loosed itself from the hook, and flew up wriggling pretty high over the grass-tufts and oak-sprouts; and I bounded up pretty brisk not to lose sight of him. Just as I got to the upper level, I saw a hare scampering away from the very spot where I guessed that the trout had fallen; and being taken by surprise, and forgetting his graminivorous qualities, I made sure that he had got my captive between his teeth, and was running off with it to devour it at his leisure. So fully did this idea take possession of my mind, that I pursued the fancied robber with all my speed, not at all to secure himself, but to deprive him of his ill-got spoil. After a perch or two my ideas righted themselves, and I laughed at my ill-timed haste, and leisurely returned towards the starting point. There, sure enough, I found the lair in a large tuft of grass and sprouts, and the trout kicking inside. Thus I frightened the trout by pulling him out of the river; the trout frightened the hare by falling into his bed; and the hare frightened me again by being

in such a hurry—a vicious circle of frights, if I understand the term.

Joanna.—Oh, Harry, you said one fine long word, *gram—gram*—something; you must learn me the correct *pronuncision* of it, and maybe I won't leave a word in the cheek of some people I know.

Charley.—Harry has brought us to the wood opposite Rathnure; I will conduct you across the river to Dr. Kelly, Harry's *relation.* Now *there* is a man who I am sure would distinguish himself in commerce, or literature, or active pursuits of some kind, if his lot had not fallen in so remote a nook, or if he possessed any active ambition. He is a good poet, a skilful man in common complaints, and he has read every book within miles of him; then he is such a mimic! Did any of you ever see him dance the dance of Jemmy Carroll the brogue-maker, or tell his exploits at the Raheens? I wish I could give you a notion of his drollery, but that comes only by nature, like making love, and reading, and writing. Jemmy has made brogues in his time for some of the company, I dare say. An honester or simpler character is not in existence, I believe, though he does turn in his toes quite naturally. When he happens to be in very good humour, he relates this incident of his youth, and gives a specimen of the dance of 'the days that are gone.' But you would rather see Dr. Kelly imitate him than see the man himself.

Edward.—Like the actor who squeeled more naturally than the pig under his rival's coat. Come, Charley, as the doctor is not here, supply his place as well as you can.

CHAPTER XXX.

MINUETS, LONG DANCES, AND MAY-BOYS.

After a decent share of pressing Charley put as stupid an expression and as complacent a smirk on his features as they were capable of receiving, and with suitable action thus gave Jemmy's oration:—

"Vwell, sence you must know something o' me coortin' days, here it is:—One fine Sunday, about turty years

agone, we all cut a *gaach* to go out to Scollagh to a dance dat was held at de Rawheens. I vos a gay young fella at de time, and had a trifle laid up to buy de weddin' ring. I had on a new caroline hat, a broadcloth coat wid big yalla buttons, an' a special pair o' buckskins, a little crusty wid de brogues. Vwell, we stood by a little fwhile lookin' an at de dancers, an' I fancied de girls wor beginnin' to trow sheeps' eyes at meself an' me legs unknownst. At last who should come up, an' make a polite curtchy to meself, but Miss Katty Vawters, an' she de purtiest colleen an de Rawheens, or de seven townlands round 'em. Her cap was equal to de driven snow, an' you'd say dat de rainbow had fallen on it out o' de sky, be way of ribbons. She had an a pair o' nice well-grazed turn-pumps, and sky-blue stockins, de fella of de rainbow for a handkecher, a nate cotton gownd, and a purple quilted petticoat, good enough for de Lady Liftinent.

"Vwell, dere vos a blush in her cheeks, an' a roguish smile in de corners of her mout an' eyes, an' says she to me, 'Mr. Carroll, I'll tance vud you, sir, if you plaze.' 'Oh, fait, Miss Vawters,' says meself, 'I never tanced a step in me life: many tanks for d' axin.' 'Oh,' says she, again, 'dickens a man o' your legs dere ever vos but could tance vwell.' 'Gramachree you wor for politeness, Miss Katty. De good drop an' de larnin always show demselves: an' if we are to perform, what tchune will I call for?' 'Your will is my pleasure, Mr. Carroll,' says she. 'Well, den, Miss,' says I, once more, 'What do you say to 'Tatter Jack Walsh,' or de 'Cumulum?' 'Oh, sir,' says de lady, 'I tink dem isn't genteel tchunes.' 'Well, den, Miss Katty,' says I, 'say only de word, an' here's my heart an' pumps at your purty feet.' 'Well, sir, let us begin wid movin de minuet, and den we'll have 'Kill de Keerogues' (earwigs), or 'Hushin' de Sheep.' 'Wid all de vanes o' me sowl,' says I. 'Piper, give Miss Vawters and meself de genteelest minuet you have in de bag, and maybe we won't open de eyes o' de Carlow people.'

"Well an' good, he squeezed de belliss, an' de drone began buzzin', an' out comes de beautifullest slow air you ever heared, an' I takes me caroline, and holds it under me

arm, and seizes on Katty be de nice, red, fat fingers, an' we moved de minuet, meself makin' a low bow every now an' den, an' wavin' me hat, an' me partner holdin' out de skert ov her gownd, and kurtchyin so gracefully, dat betune she and I all de behowlders burst out a laughin' wid joy an' admiration.

"When the minuet was over, 'Now, piper,' says I, 'graze your elbow, and give us 'Tatter de Road;' an' we laid to—Miss Katty an' meself. Ah, didn't we soon clear a ring for ourselves, and didn't she humour d' air wid head and ribbons, and one hand on her hip; and wasn't it purty to see her nice little pumps goin' in an' out, an' her nice shaped *ceann dhu* (black head) duckin' dis way an' dat, wid de ribbons on it; an' didn't I play heel an' toe, and cover de buckle, and make room for ourselves, wid every kick an' flourish, as high as your showlders! When de dance was over, de company waved deir hats an' hurraad for de lady an' her partner; an' I give you my word dat from den to now dere never vos seen such a cut an de Rawheens again."

It is a pity that I cannot present in words the fatuous, self-satisfied expression of Charley's features, copied from the poor simple hero's ordinary look, as he related his exploits. Some were striving to restrain their exploding hilarity; others were indulging in open laughter; but when he jumped out on the floor, and with toes turned in, and elbows squared, began to copy the actual steps, dire confusion ensued. Every one was obliged to get into corners or stand on chairs, so perilous were the awkward whirls he executed, and so lofty were his kicks; and all the while his toes most determinedly confronting each other, and his arms executing the most eccentric flourishes.

At last, just as every side was aching, and the muscles of every face tired with laughing, he was forced to give over; I think he felt a stiffness in his joints in the morning.

Redmond was obliged to take a stiff glass of punch after his exercise, and so full of animal spirits was he, that in a few minutes he was ready to join in the conversation going on. Before our pleasant evening came to a close he related

some particulars of a long dance and the performance of the May-boys, which occurred some years previous. This was chiefly for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Kavanagh, and little Pat and Peggy, and one or two others, who never had the good luck to see these spectacles in person.

"I had the good fortune, about the year 1812, to escort the May-boys from Paudh Mor's in Forrestalstown to the lawn in Castleboro, to see some of the performances, and enjoy the tricks of Mr. Clown and Mrs. Clown.

"At an early hour in the afternoon of some Sunday or holiday that fell about old Beltane, some hundreds of us, young men and boys, were assembled about the bawn and little farm-house of Big Paddy Murphy, for the May-boys were decorating within. To play-goers, impatient for the rising of the curtain, it is interesting even to get a glimpse of the boots and slippers of the actors and actresses, as they pass and repass behind the screen. (Charley had seen the 'Lady of the Lake' acted in the market-house of Enniscorthy). So to us, loitering in the bawn, it was most exciting to catch a sight of ribbon or sash, as boy or girl crossed the passage from kitchen to parlour. After a reasonable pause we had the delight of seeing twelve young men come forth, accompanied by the same number of young women, the boys dressed much more showily than the girls. They were in their shirt-sleeves, waistcoats, knee-breeches, white stockings, and turned pumps; sashes of bright colours round their waists, and ribbons of every hue encircling hats, shirt-sleeves, knees, and bodies, the shoulders getting even more than their due. The girls, their hair decked with ribbons, were in their Sunday garb; but for once the admiration of the crowd was given to the men and their ornaments. To heighten the beauty of the spectacle, out sprung the fool and his wife, the first with some head-dress of skin, a frightful mask, and a goat's beard descending from it. Though we knew that the big, bluff, good-natured countenance of Paudh himself was behind the vizard, we could scarcely refrain from taking flight, not being able any more than other children to look on an ugly mask without extreme terror. His wife (little Tom Blanche, the tailor) was in an orange-tawny gown,

flaming handcherchief, and mob-cap, and had a tanned, ugly female mask, fitting pretty close to her face. Paudh's first salute to his friends was a yell, a charge in various directions, and a general thrashing of the crowd with his pea-furnished bladder suspended from a long stick. Mrs. Clown had a broom, and used it to some purpose when she found her friends disposed to crowd her.

"After a few charges and retreats we got into marching order, the performers in front, the fool and his wife around and behind them to prevent annoyance, and the delighted assembly bringing up the rear. In this state we reached the big fields of Tinnock, and proceeded by the long, straight fence dividing them till we crossed the road, entered the grove, and defiled on the castle lawn. Considerable amusement was excited as we passed along the big field, by a sportive youth devoting some soft compliments and caresses to the fool's wife, while his (the husband's) attention was momentarily occupied by other matters. But that was nothing to the fun of seeing the jealous husband, when he found his domestic repose invaded, rushing at the libertine, chasing him through the crowd, and bestowing noisy chastisement on innocent and guilty alike, till the culprit sued for mercy. The farce of reconciliation succeeded the tragedy. It was affecting to see the false siren, with apron to eyes and sobs in voice, sidle up to Goat's-beard, and wheedle him into good-humour again. Sealing the re-union with a hearty embrace, they showed their joy by a new rush on the assembly, and scattered them to all points of the compass, amidst shouts of laughter and ludicrous fright.

"Alas for defenceless and unpatronized youth! both sides of the walk and the front of the sweep before the castle were as thick with spectators as leaves in Kilaughrim, and we of tender years and short stature could not get a glimpse of what was going on, even between the legs of the beholders. We saw the family of the great house enjoying the scene from the first-floor windows, heard the brisk music, and the rapid pacing of the dancers as they swept in the Rinka Fadha, east and west, and the clattering of Paudh's peas as the tight-blown bladder came with fright-

ful slap on the visages of intruders. As for the steps and figures we cared not for them, but it would have been a delight to see the nicely dressed and finely-shaped dancers rushing in and out, and the fluttering ribbons catching the sunlight. Sad and disappointed we stood behind, striving to get a peep over the intervening shoulders, listening to the flying of the gravel, the rattling of the peas, the skirling of the bagpipes, the screaming of the fiddles, and the shouts that at times were raised for the dancers and the gentlefolk.

It came to an end, and the dancers were taken into the castle and refreshed. It was not uncommon to have barrels of beer stationed on the lawn on such occasions for the refreshment of the country, but whether it was the case or not on that Maytide festival we cannot say. Disgusted with our hard fate, we quitted the scene—so joyous to some, so joyless to others—and brought peace to our troubled mind by a homeward walk along the green *inches* by Boro's side.

The next visit paid was to Mr. Graham's, of the Mill. So far the girls accompanied their brothers, lovers, or neighbours, but no farther. The after-calls were to Fitzhenry's, of Ballymackesy; to Squire Richards', of Grange under Blackstairs; to Mr. Blacker's, of Woodbrook; to Major Cookman's, of Kilaughrim Wood; to Mr. Farmar's, to Dunsinane; to Mr. Alcock's, of Wilton Castle; and to the houses of some clergymen. Wherever they appeared the servant girls and those of the immediate neighbourhood gladly gave a touch to caps, hair, and handkerchiefs, and helped them out in their design to enliven the spirits of the country.

Wherever the night descended on them they continued the dance by candlelight, were entertained hospitably, and took their rest as best they might. As to undoing their ribbon-fastenings, and divesting themselves of their May-dresses, nothing could be done. Many a tumbler of punch the poor fellows drank at the hospitable houses they visited, and many a headache they experienced in early mornings; but they held out with determination till towards the end of the week. On Saturday we encountered our merry-men

again, but ah, how changed! Their faces were pale or inflamed, their eyes bloodshot, their clothes soiled, their ribbons frayed and dirty, and their frames wearied and listless. Six out of the twelve, sans fool and fool's companion, entered in the afternoon the bawn of Father James Murphy of Coolbawn. The good-hearted, hospitable priest was not at home, but his kind niece was. The girls were collected, the jigs and reels and hornpipes were achieved,—well or ill, as pleased the fates,—refreshments were produced and taken, and with a farewell from the fiddle our half-dozen belated revellers bade adieu, and repaired to their homes in Askenfarny, or Rathnure, or Forrestalstown, divested themselves of their lendings, took a long sleep, and set the troubled minds of their fathers and mothers at ease. Many a woman, gossipping with her neighbours about this time, would be heard to exclaim, "Thank God that May-day can't come oftener than once in the year."

All that our May-boys received for their exertions were a deal of fatigue, some illness, and as much as they chose to eat and drink wherever they held a station. Gold, silver, or copper they would not touch.

So ended Charley's narrative, in which the reader will excuse some words and expressions not coming naturally in a country boy's way, but found in the books which he happened to beg or borrow between Courtnacuddy and Castleboro. Wishing to crowd as many phases of country life as possible into this volume, we give the conversation about mummers and so forth which then ensued, in a more condensed shape than it assumed on that evening.

Of the old pastime of mumming some traces existed in the county of Wexford about the period here treated of, and even some years later, but they were scarcely found as far north or west as the May-dances. The last company we can recall to mind was raised in the neighbourhood of Ballybrennan, on the way leading from Clonroche to Brie Hill.

They entertained the chief folk in their neighbourhood by decking themselves as fantastically as they could, and

as best tending to present in the most striking manner *St. George, St. Patrick, Oliver Cromwell, a doctor, Beelzebub,* and a devil of inferior pretensions. The time of representation being arrived, the scene being the hall of the manor-house, the big kitchen of the gentleman-farmer, or perhaps his barn, and the company being collected, a boy, dressed as nearly in the style of a Punch or a clown as they could manage, came out from a corner, or a portion screened off, or the next room, according to the circumstances and locality, and thus delivered his prologue, waving his bauble as gracefully as he could :—

"Room, room, brave gallants,
Come give us room to rhyme,
For I'm come to show my mirth
And activity in Christmas time.

"Active young and active age,
The like was never acted on a stage ;
And if you believe not what I say,
Enter in, St. George, and boldly clear the way."

St. George, equipped with red sash, knee-breeches tied with ribbons, large buckles in his shoes, a feathered hat with rim looped up in front, and a wooden falchion provided with a basket-hilt, came on as the attendant sprite retired ; and, making the six broadsword cuts, saluted and spoke as follows :—

"Here am I, St. George ;
From England have I sprung,
One of these noble deeds of valour to begin.
Seven long years in a close cave have I been kept,
And out of that upon a prison leapt ;
And out of that upon a rock of stone,
Where I made my sad and grievous moan.
Many a joiant I did subdue ;
I run the fiery dragon through and through ;
I freed fair Sabra from the stake ;
What more could mortal man then undertake ?
I fought them all courageously,
And still have gained the victory.
For England's right and Ireland's nation
Here I draw my bloody weapon.
Show me the man that daares me stand ;
I'll cut him down with my courageous hand."

Here entered *St. Patrick*, in attire similar to that of St. George, green prevailing in feathers, sash, and ribbons. He threw himself into fighting attitude, and some broad-sword cuts and guards were exhibited by the two saints, but all as yet in pure courtesy :—

"St. Patrick.

"Here, I'm the man that daare you challenge,
Whose courage is great ;
And with my sword I make dukes and earls quake."

"St. George.

"What are you, St. Patrick, but St. George's boy ?
He fed his horse seven long years on oats and hay,
And afterwards he run away."

"St. Patrick (*enraged*).

"I say, St. George, you lie, sir,
Pull out your soord and thry, sir.
Pull out your purse and pay, sir.
I'll run my rapier through your body, and make you run away, sir."

[*They fight ; St. George falls.*

"St. Patrick (*in a fright*).

"A docthor, a docthor !
Ten pounds for a docthor !
Is there ne'er a docthor to be found,
To heal the prince of his deep and deadly wound ?"

Enter *Doctor*, in black clothes and three-cornered hat ; he is furnished with a red nose and carries a cane and pill-box.

"Doctor.

"Here I am, a doctor pure and good,
And with me soord I'll staunch his blood.
If you wish this prince's life to save,
Full fifty guineas I must have."

"St. Patrick.

"Doctor, doctor, what can you cure ?"

"Doctor.

"What can't I cure ?
I can cure the plague within, the plague without,
The palsy, small-pox, and the gout ;

And if the Devil was within, I'd surely rout him out.
Moreover, if you bring me an old woman of threescore and ten,
And the knuckle-bone of her hip be broke, I'll set it to rights again.
[*Here St. George rises and retires.*
And if you believe me not in what I say,
Enter in, Oliver Cromwell, and boldly clear the way."
[*Retires as Oliver enters.*

Enter *Oliver Cromwell*, armed with a yeomanry-cavalry sword, and ornamented with a yeomanry-cavalry helmet, jack-boots, buckskin-breeches, and black stock. His look is truculent, and his nose very red.

"OLIVER CROMWELL.

"Here am I, Oliver Cromwell, as you may suppose.
I conquered many nations wid me copper nose.
I made the French to tremble an' the Spaniards for to quake,
An' I beat the jolly Dutchmen till I made their hearts to ache.
And if you don't believe what I say,
Enter in, Beelzebub, and clear the way."
[*He flourishes his sword and withdraws.*]

Enter *Beelzebub*, in a black wig and red vizard, somewhat of a Punch character. He carries a hump, and one hand grasps a club, and the other a frying-pan. He clatters these as he enters :—

"BEELZEBUB.

"Here am I, Beelzebub,
And over my shoulder I carry my club,
And in my hand a dripping-pan ;
I think myself a jolly old man ;
And if you don't believe what I say,
Enter in, Devil D'Out, and clear the way."
[*Knocks the pan with the club, and exit.*

Enter *Devil D'Out*, the youth who presented the prologue. He wields a broom as he comes forward, and more or less annoys those who come nearest him :—

"DEVIL D'OUT.

"Here I am, little Devil D'Out,
If yous don't give me money, I'll sweep yous all out.
[*Broom wielded.*
Money I want and money I crave,
If yous don't give me money I'll sweep yous to the grave."

Whatever might elsewhere be the case, the mummers known to us would not condescend to soil their consequence by a collection. Now all the characters came forward, and, taking hands, danced a kind of reel with much gesticulation. Partners were afterwards selected from among the girls, and Christmas licence prevailed to a tolerably late hour. When mummers visited a manor-house or large farm-house, they were treated to punch. When they merely occupied a barn to entertain their neighbours, general dancing concluded the entertainment—the fiddler in all cases being paid by the mummers, who never received any recompense beyond meat and drink.

The latest exposition of these Ballybrennan artists which rises before us commenced at the first fair that was held in Clonroche, some forty years since. Wonderful was the excitement, great the crowd, and long the procession that attended them thence to Castleboro. As fresh as giants, they could not be content to walk the ground—they absolutely danced the whole way, cheered by the strains of their paid minstrel, Billeen *Keol* (music), of Ballayden, and the gratuitous melody of Neddy Martin's violin. A night of revel and joy ensued. The stable lofts of Castleboro were given up to musicians, actors, dancers, and spectators, the "quality" not disdaining to listen to the pageant, or join in the general dancing. Comparing our recollections with our present experience, we seem to have dropped in on another and a bleaker world.

This entertainment, as will be at once seen, was Anglo-Saxon in its origin—the degenerate representative of one of those old pageants such as the gentlemen in "Love's Labour Lost" introduced to entertain the Princess of France and her ladies. If we had room, we might here expiate on the hold that old English songs, old English sports, and old English expressions have kept upon the inhabitants of our south-eastern counties, although they are thoroughly Irish in their aspirations, proud of their Irish descent, and deeply imbued with the Celtic spirit and temperament.

We must perforce take this opportunity of declaring our opinion, even though it may be charged with the preposses-

sions of early associations, that the people of Wexford county combine in their dispositions most of the good qualities of the Celtic and the Anglo-Saxon character.

In the upper parts of Wexford the tune called "Dhroghedy's March" was occasionally danced to among the hornpipes, by a performer furnished with a short cudgel in each hand, which he brandished and clashed in harmony with the tune. But we had the good fortune to see it performed in a complete fashion on the borders of the barony of Bargy, in the old manor-house of Coolcul, whose young men, joined by the stout servants and labourers on the farms, were well able, in country parlance, to clear a fair. Among these the present chronicler was initiated into the mysteries of mumming, and was taught to bear his part in that relic of the Pyrrhic or Druidic dance, "Dhroghedy's March." We practised it in one of the large parlours, and this was the style of its execution :—

Six men or boys stood in line, at reasonable distances apart, and six others stood opposite them, all armed as described. When the music began, feet, and arms, and sticks commenced to keep time. Each dancer, swaying his body to the right and left, described an upright figure of 8 with his fists, both of them following the same direction, the ends of the sticks forming the same figure, of course. In these movements no noise was made, but at certain bars the arms moved rapidly up and down, the upper and lower halves of the right-hand stick striking the lower half of the left-hand stick in the descent of the right arm, and the upper half of it in the ascent, and *vice versa*. At the pr per point of the march each man commenced a kind y fencing with his *vis-a-vis*, and the clangs of the cudg l coincided with the beats of the music and the moveme y of the feet. Then commenced the involutions, evoluti s interlacings, and unwindings, every one striking at the us son with whom the movement brought him face tured and the sounds of the sticks supplying the hoctook to reels. It was a stirring but apparently confusednough to which, when the music was good and the dan tants kept time, strongly interested and excits to secure a on. The steps, which we have forgotter twig of an ivy

been difficult, for *we* mastered them, or *it*—a most exceptional case.

This war-dance is (or was) performed to a martial tune resembling Brian Borumha's march in some respects. We hope the air will not be forgotten.

This exercise is a far-off echo of the Pyrrhic sword-and-buckler dance; or, like the Rinka Fadha, it has been bequeathed to us by the Druids—one dance being a preparatory exordium to a campaign, the other a tribute of gratitude to the gods for victory. But as the tune to which the movements are made is intensely Celtic in character, there is a strong presumption that it has descended to us in some shape from the days of Osgur and Goll, along with May-bushes, Midsummer bonfires, and tricks on All Hallow Eve.

Among some dim recollections of ours are scattered the "Tobies," whose ruling superstition was a belief in the virtue of eggs collected at Easter. They were not much respected in general. They dressed themselves as fantastically as they could in scraps of drapery of all descriptions, went in companies of from four to six, and demanded their spare eggs from disturbed housekeepers. As they approached farm houses in the absence of the menkind, their appearance was not agreeable in the eyes of the women. Their habitat was the eastern portion of the county of Wexford. We do not recollect seeing them west of the Slaney. It was once our lot to see in their corps as fine a specimen of a young fellow as could be met with, a profusion of rags hanging round him in the most picturesque disorder, and his manly, sun-burnt features glowing with careless enjoyment. They occasionally sang and danced, but rarely went to the expense of a paid musician. They did not remain together so long as the spummers or the Mayboys. Having collected a sufficient inhab.of eggs, they made their feast. Under happy circumthoroug they converted part of their hoard into whisky, descent, cakes and butter for the trouble of asking, and perament. ir eggs. Any other chance delicacies that came

We must pere not rejected, and at the termination of the opinion, even th

festival and the separation of the allies the usages of sober and polite society were not in request.

Very different were the *pleidhogues*, or village-reunions of little boys and girls whose school days were not yet at an end. Fifty years since, after the dinner on Shrove-Tuesday, a piece of the boiled meat was fastened pretty high in the chimney, and there it remained, well impregnated with smoke, till Easter Sunday morning, not a bit of similar food having been consumed in the family in the interim.

During the last week of Lent, as nobody dreamed of eating an egg, eggs in abundance graced the Easter breakfast table, and on Easter Monday the little men and women under thirteen years of age assembled in some dry sheltery ditch or quarry-hole, bringing their supplies of griddle-cakes, eggs, butter, dry sticks or turf, and egg-spoons fashioned by themselves of ash or oak boughs, or any suitable chance splinters that had come in their way. A roaring fire was soon made, the eggs roasted, and the social meal proceeded. The seven weeks of Lent were cheered by conversations concerning this Easter jollification, and allusions to its past enjoyment did not cease or flag from Easter Tuesday till Whitsuntide.

Not so low in public esteem as the Tobies, but many degrees under the Mayboys and mummers, were the wren-boys, who in our youth flourished in the eastern portion of the county. No doubt we have seen and been among parties of boys who lost much time on St. Stephen's Day, in searching for a little *dhruleen* (wren) through the furze bushes, generally without success; but on the solitary occasion when the chase was successful, and we had secured the lifeless body of the poor little thing (it was accidentally killed) in a holly bush, we only serenaded our own families and Father Murphy's niece. She insisted on treating us to some beer. The most courageous of the party ventured to taste it, but incontinently spluttered it out, and took to his heels. None of the others was found hardy enough to try its flavour.

The professional artists used by some means to secure a live wren, and fasten it by a string to the twig of an ivy

or holly-bush, and, enlivened by the strains of an ear-piercing fife, invade the quiet of strong farmers' houses, and dance, and shout, and sing the well-known legend beginning—

> "The wran, the wran, the king of all birds,
> On St. Stephen's day was caught in the furze," &c.

Then hands were taken, and steps performed round the *bouchal na dhruleen*, who capered away in his best style, shaking the bush and the poor prisoner in unison. They generally succeeded in extracting drink or money; and the day's labours ended with a carouse, for detailing the mysteries of which we have no relish.

In most boys under fifteen pity for the sufferings of small animals is a mere exception. Still, among country boys, the feelings and lives of robins and wrens are respected, and the merry little brown bird would be suffered to enjoy its Christmas holidays but for the following legend. When the Jews were in search of St. Stephen, they lost their labour for a long time, till, on passing by a clump of furze-bushes, they observed a couple of wrens flying in and out, and chattering in a most unaccountable manner. They had the curiosity to pull a bush aside, and there they discovered the saint concealed. What more reasonable than to punish the poor little *dhruleen* of the nineteenth century, for the crime of his ancestors committed in the first?

During that joyful evening I enjoyed a pleasant conversation with Mrs. Kavanagh, part of it turning on the happy reconciliation of our two friends, and part on recollections of our former playmates, and gossip respecting their present condition. At intervals her sweet voice chimed in with the general body of conversation through the room, and the sweet expression of her face diffused an additional glow on the cordial feeling which pervaded the social party.

And here, if I were conscious of the power to do so effectually, I would launch forth into the praises of womankind, and paint them as fairer, body and soul, than ever author

has yet described them. How often is the man of business a weary, lone, cross-grained creature when returning home after his day's labour and anxieties; and how ready is he to find fault with everything around him: yet how soon is he restored to content and cheerfulness by the considerate affection of his wife! Let every one who was once a boy, and was blessed with an affectionate and judicious mother, recal how she held in his mind and heart the place of a kind of sweet feminine Providence, looking to his wants, smoothing his difficulties, and solacing him in his puerile afflictions. And as the father reads these lines, he brings to mind, his fawning, gentle, loving little daughter, and tells me that further speech is useless. I will not ask any young or middle-aged man to summon before him the air, the face, or the form of HER who holds his heart in the meshes of her hair. He will do that without my prompting.

Book V.

TRIALS AND TROUBLES.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OVER THE HILLS.

THE following Saturday, as the O'Brien family were sitting down to their twelve o'clock dinner, the party was increased by Joanna's brother, who had been brought down in the morning by Sleeveen to assist at some pressing farm labour. Garret gave his "God save all here!" and paid his awkward compliments to the seniors, and hoped "that Joanna was more intent on her work than on consulting the *dixhenry* for big words."

Joanna.—Dear me, how people can't let a body alone for being circumspicial in their language! When a silk

apron is as cheap as a chequer one, isn't it nicer to wear it?

Mrs. O'Brien.—I am afraid it would only make the other parts of a dress look worse, Joanna.

Joanna.—Well, I declare, ma'am I can't abjure fine words ever since I was a little *thuckeen* in Rathnure-chapel school that was teached by Mr. Diarmuid K. Oh! what a fine class we used to have in the evenings! and *usen't* I examine the little square dixhenry every day for hard words to give out to the *king!* What a pity them juvenile times dosen't always stay with poor little boys and girls! All our trouble was to have our column well off for the master in the morning, as we'd be slingeing along the crooked sheltery lane to the chapel, and wouldn't the little boys and ourselves have a fine ree-raw at *prison-bars* at playtime! And poor Father Murphy that's now sent away to the Macamores ever so far beyond Enniscorthy—what pains he used to take to teach us the catechism, and prepare us for confirmation; and what a kind, tender, heart he had; and all the time he'd be striving to keep a rough look on his face! And now if I only strive to keep up my class words in my intellectial fackilties, yez all only make game of me except them that has sense.

Sleeveen.—I suppose Tom Sweetman is one of the *sensible* ones?

Joanna.—No, indeed; I don't think Tom ever gave himself much trouble with the class, and *sign's on him* he's hardly fit for the *Readamadasy* now.

Sleeveen.—I wonder, then, how you can care for such an ignoramus as Tom?

Joanna.—Who says I care for him? But I do care for him indeed, as I would care for any innocent-minded young fellow that works from morning to night at the *ling* of his life whether any one is near him or not; and that never strives to make a fool of any young girl with sweet talk; and that isn't ashamed of staying on his knees in the chapel, when other lazy undevotional sthrās is bleaching themselves lying on the broad of their backs out in the chapel-yard. I tell you what, Sleeveen; if you *wor* owner of Castleboro (thank God, you're not), with a silk cravat round your scraggy neck, and a glistening beaver on

your foxy head, and were rowling in a varnished carriage with two *deers* minding your coat of arms and the Latin words under it, Tom Sweetman's track in the gutter would be better nor your *insignicafant* sowl and body. I am quite in earnest, I tell you.

Sleeveen.—*Thraath* we're obleeged to you, Miss Lacy; it's a pity you haven't a coat of arms yourself that 'ud match your tongue. So I suppose we must all take Tom Sweetman and his young master for pattern; must we? Easy now! There is no use in me saying anything in their disparagement (there is a fine long word for you, Miss Joanna); I don't want to do it. What can I gain by it? But maybe if Garrett there chose to speak, he could tell you the nice occupation they were at this morning.

Here the company suspended their operations; the noggins of milk rested on the lips, the knife with its piece of butter stuck to the potato, and Theresa's heart beat fast.

"I think, Mr. Sleeveen," said Garrett, "you are old and ugly enough to take your own part. I'll have nothing to do with your fending and proving."

Sleeveen.—Well, well; you need not take me up so short; I don't want to be a story-teller, or be putting betune people; nobody was doing nothing that was wrong; let every tub stand on its own bottom. I'll not be scalding my fingers in any one's porridge.

Mrs. O'Brien.—Don't hurry or annoy yourself, Sleeveen. We all know what your good word is worth, after the Enniscorthy business; so you may tell your story or not, just as you find it convenient.

Sleeveen.—Well, now, mistress, you are very hard on me; sure all I done was *ony* in a misunderstanding, if it was one, but I doubt it very much, especially after what we *see* this morning. Would it be a proper thing on my part, after sitting at your table for twelve years, to hold my tongue when the person who thinks he is good enough for our young mistress was keeping up, as I thought, a shameful connexion elsewhere? And indeed I think still that Peggy Kavanagh knew more nor she chose to tell you. She was always a tom-boy, and so fond of *gorsoon's* sports

with Roche, and Redmond, and Whitney, and the rest, that you'd hardly ever see her sitting quietly with other little girls playing jackstones, and she'd do anything still for any one of them. Well, well, *folly* your own way; Sleeveen washes his hands out of the job."

"Throth an' they'd want it," said Joanna; "I don't think you used a ha'porth of soap these seven years. Now if you tell us all you saw without lies or malice, I'll wash your sacking shirt against to-morrow-week with my own hands."

Sleeveen.—Faith, I'd rather you'd hear it from *Girodh*. You'd be putting bad constructions on anything I'd say, even if it was at my prayers I was. But truth is truth; I'll show my gratitude to my good master and his family, I don't care who objects to it; and if I go a step one side or the other, I'll give *him* leave to pull me up. And now here's all we saw or heard. When I got to your house this morning, I took *him* up the road a bit along with me towards Dick Forrestal's, to look at a horse he has for sale. After we had our look at the animal, and were just crossing the *ditch*, we sees Bryan and Tom coming up the lonesome road, with the creel fixed on the car, as if they were going for turf. They come to a dead stop, and wor' lookin' back, and *who* should we see coming up after them but Biddy Foley and a very well-dressed young woman that neither of us knew. '*Sha gu dhein*,' says I to myself, 'what's the meaning of this?' and he and I stayed behind the ditch, and looked through the big furze that was growing on it. Well, we hadn't long to wait when up comes the two women, and there was great shaking of hands. We could only hear a word or two, and these were from Biddy, and they were as much as to ask Bryan to take care of the other girl; and he laughed, and made answer that she needn't fear, or something that way. After a little while spent in compliments, Biddy shook hands with the other three, and turned back; and Tom set out with the halter in his hand; and Bryan and the young girl followed, talking very cordially with one another. They were soon so far ahead, that we couldn't hear a word if we didn't run with our heads down inside the ditch; and I

hope the little drop of blood we have is too *dasent* to allow us to do such a *mane* thing. So they were soon out of sight, for it is mighty crooked, the same lane; and there is our story just as it happened. If you think I'm inventin', you've only to ax *Girodh.*"

It is needless to say that Garrett was spared any questions. Mrs. O'Brien, and Theresa, and Joanna knew well enough that if the tale was not substantially true he would have cut Sleeveen's oration very short. If any woman from fifteen to forty-five years of age has followed our narrative up to this point, and if she has ever loved and thought her love returned, she will now kindly close the book, pity poor Theresa's sufferings, and give free scope to sympathy for the misery inflicted on her by Sleeveen's tale. She was unable to master her utterance for some time; but then, resolutely pressing down her sorrow, she remarked:—"All you have said may be true enough, Sleeveen, and still Bryan may not have done anything wrong. We are not to pass judgment on one that has never been known to do a bad or vicious action, because there is some appearance against him that cannot be explained at once. When the truth is known he will be found as innocent as before."

She was able to get thus far, but here her heart seemed as if it was about to break, and something to swell in her throat, and stop her utterance. She whispered to her mother, and retired to her bed-room, and as soon as Mrs. O'Brien came in after her, and sat down by her, she burst into a fit of low weeping. She felt it would be a relief to cry aloud, but her habitual self-restraint and unwillingness to draw the attention of the household on her prevented that indulgence.

Her mother drew her head over to her bosom, and striving to suppress her own misgivings, endeavoured to console her with much the same assurances that she herself had given utterance to at the dinner-table; but they could not be productive of much comfort, as the poor consoler did not feel their force very strongly herself. She was unable in all the range of her limited experience to account for any innocent cause for his going on a journey with a

strange girl whom no one knew, and with whom he seemed on such friendly terms.

Little did domestic matters interest Joanna for the next two or three hours. She visited Mrs. Roche on some pretence, but neither Bryan or Tom had yet returned. Theresa, after the first burst of sorrow, had become calm in appearance, and now went about her ordinary business, but with a disturbed heart and absent mind. Garrett was secured by Joanna, and minutely examined as to the words that were overheard, and whether he saw any appearance of courtship between the parties, but he could give very little real help in the matter. He saw them shake hands, and observed them talk rather earnestly, but there were no farther signs of familiarity; even this was a partial relief.

Poor Joanna continued to go about like a disturbed spirit, or, as she herself would have said, "like a hen on a hot griddle;" Sleeveen went off on a secret mission; and every thing wore on uncomfortably, till at last, about three o'clock in the evening, the creel of turf, the horse, and Tom were descried by Joanna, but no appearance of Bryan. Joanna intercepted Tom. He had to pass the gate that connected the premises with the lane common to both houses, and with little of her ordinary hesitation (for true affection had a sobering effect even on Joanna's volubility, when tete-a-tete with her sweetheart), she asked of Bryan's whereabouts. "Oh, he met a little delay," said Tom; "he'll be here by-and-by. You did not even say, 'How are you, Tom?' after this broiling day: I'm almost jealous of my young master."

Joanna.—Jealous *inya!* to be sure you are; but where did you stay all day? how far had you to go for the load?

Tom.—Oh! we had to search ever so much; and at long last we got it at the Somers's of Ballygibbon, a long way off, and so many turns as there are in the lanes.

Joanna.—Ballygibbon indeed! Why, you might have been there and back twice since you left this morning about seven o'clock.

Tom.—How did you know when we left, Joanna? Well, well; maybe you think something about us, and well you

ought any way. You're never out of my mind a quarter of an hour from dawn till dark.

Joanna.—Yes, to be sure, and maybe it's galavanting yourself and your master were all the day with the girls of Ballybawn or Ballygibbon. Oh, by this and by that! if I ever hear of you so much as putting your arm round another girl, or your master either, Miss Theresa nor myself will never open our lips to either one or the other of you. Now if you wish me not to fall out with you, what kept you out all day, and where is Bryan?

Joanna's usually good-humoured face wore such a determined expression at this juncture that poor Tom was very much embarrassed. So he made answer in a very shambling style, that Bryan had turned over to Dick Forrestal's as they were returning, and that he did not overtake him afterwards. "Indeed, maybe it's at home he is now," said he. "What need we vex ourselves about it? haven't we pleasanter things to talk about? and, Goodness knows, it's little time we get for it.

Joanna.—I tell you, *Mister* Sweetman, it's little pleasantness you'll get from me if you don't speak out the naked truth about this business. You're striving now to blindfold the divel in the dark; so back I turn here, and when you want my company again, you'll get it *mauya!*

Here she turned on her heel as if to fulfil her threat, but Tom seized her plump arm with a firm but gentle grasp, and begged her not to be too hasty, saying, "Come down with me now to the house; maybe Bryan has got home by a short cut; and then you'll know all the ins and outs of it. Me to be talking to any one but yourself! Why, there's Miss O'Brien herself; every one does be praising her beauty, but in *my* eyes, any way, your own face is the purtiest of either gentle or simple in the whole country." "Oh, dear! how soft our horns are! but I'll soon know whether you are deceiving me or not. I'll only go with you to the next turn; and when I think you are in the bawn I'll follow you. But mind what I said just now: let me catch you in a lie, and down goes your house."

When Sweetman entered the bawn there was a rush from the door, and a bundle of questions fell on his head

about the delay, and why Bryan was not along with him. Tom reproduced the used-up excuses he had made to Joanna, and said he was sure Bryan would be in shortly. Joanna joined the group very *accidentally*, and being incensed at the double duplicity of the swains, she managed to secure Mrs. Roche's ear for a moment, and soon after Master Tom was summoned to the parlour. There, in presence of his mistress, and with his true love for his stern accuser, he was arraigned for his own and his master's misdeeds.

"Oh, ma'am," said the angry but heart-sore girl, "all the men in the world is just the same good-for-nothing, undependable dissemblers, and as false as Luttrell; and those two that I thought were as true as the Gospel! Now, you big desaiver (and your master is another), if you don't tell the truth about this day's work, a pleasant word I'll never say to you, and an arm of yours will never go under my head. Tell Mrs. Roche all about your journey to-day, and the company you had from above Rathnure village, and what Biddy Foley had to do in it. Oh, *Vuya, Vuya!* the way the world goes, and the rotten sticks yez are for men! You desaiving thief, I've a mind to tear your eyes out, if I was to cry away my own after them!" And the poor girl began to sob hysterically, and clap her hands. This was more than Tom could stand; but for the shame he would have blubbered out himself.

Tom.—Joanna, my darling! don't, *asthore!* you'll kill me if you go on that way. I'll tell the truth all about it as if I was at the priest's knee; and though I'm not rightly up to the thing, I am as sure as I am of my own life that there is neither hurt nor harm in the whole of it. The young master tould me this morning, when we were on the road, that he was to see a young woman safe over Slievebawn; and, so well, so good, Biddy Foley and the same young woman overtook us at the spot you mentioned, and Biddy spoke some words to Bryan. I did not hear much of what she said, except to charge him to take care of the girl that was along with her, and then he laughed, and said, 'Never fear,' and then we went on till we came to the Crooked Bridge, and up through the village of Ballybawn.

When we were out on the mountain side, he told me to go back to the Somers's, and buy the creel of turf, and pack it carefully, and wait for him. He said it might be from two to three hours or a little longer before he could be back; and if he did not come by that time I might start for home at an easy rate, and he'd be sure to catch me. I did as he desired me, and came off. When I found he was not back at the time he appointed, I came very slow, and I looked back a hundred times, but not a shine of my eyes I laid on him from that to this.

Joanna.—And are you able to tell us what sort of talk they were going on with, any part of the way?

Tom.—Not a bit of me was alongside of them the greater part of the road; and, besides, he lifted the creel, and made her sit on the soft hay in the body of the car.

Joanna.—And took a seat beside her himself, I suppose.

Tom.—Indeed he did not; he walked by the side of the car; and any bits of the discourse that I could hear were about the places we were going through, and things that happened when he was going to the school at Rathnure.

Joanna.—And very likely, when you were a bit off, it was all love, and honey, and sugar. Oh, the vagabones of deludhers that yez all are! What do you think of all this, Mrs. Roche, and what will my poor young mistress do? Ochony oh! we will have that *sludherer* of a Mac Cracken bothering our lives out again, with his poking chin and his Inglified discourse, and my ould thief of a masther, tatteration to him! hagging, hagging, till he'll have the very flesh wasted off of our bones. And only to think that all was so nicely made up, as we thought; and maybe ourselves dancing at the wedding before winter; and now we're like the fools that went into the bog hole to look for the *cooyar* when they saw the moon's *shadow* at the bottom, and the creatures were drowned. My heavy sorrow on all old *villians* of hard-hearted fathers, and desaiving Inglified courtiers, and false-hearted sweethearts!

And the sobbing and wringing of hands went on again. Mrs. Roche had the heart of a hero, but she was a mother also, and as a woman she could not help sympathising with

Theresa in her trial. She endeavoured to calm Joanna a little, and enjoined both her hearers to say nothing to any person on the subject, and to wait as patiently as they could till Bryan's return, when they would hear his own account of the mystery. Tom went out on some business in the direction opposite to Mr. O'Brien's, but he was so confused that he mistook the way, and did not discover his mistake till he came within a few perches of the bawn gate of the latter named mansion. Persons to whom this strange blunder was mentioned asked if Joanna was returning home just then, and it was acknowledged that such was the fact, and that at the moment of Tom's finding out his error, he was seen with one of Joanna's hands inclosed in his own big paw; and that her countenance had changed its resentful expression for one of remorseful pity towards her submissive giant.

When Joanna returned she found that Nicholas had "burned no day-light" in the interim, but was at that moment in the parlour, sitting with Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien, and a friend of his, who was unknown to the master and mistress of the house. This man, though treated by the wooer with much attention and deference, had not the open nor friendly countenance of well-to-do country people. He had altogether the air of one whose hands were in his way, and whose feet were of little importance; but, as a set off, his eyes were never shut nor his ears inattentive. The few remarks he made smacked of a selfish and sinister disposition.

Joanna sought Theresa's room, and dolefully enough related the result of her visit to the Roches; and Theresa continued for a time in a sort of stupor, except when she would occasionally rouse herself, and drop on her knees, and devoutly pray for strength and submission. As the sun descended nearer and nearer to the level of the White Mountain ridge, Joanna or some other kept a look out towards the Gurrawn road, varying the watch at times by a hurried charge to Bryan's. Mr. and Mrs. Roche were puzzled and grieved exceedingly; grieved chiefly on Miss O'Brien's account, as their own faith was very strong in the uprightness of their son; but the circumstance of the

meeting was still unaccountable, and so was Bryan's previous silence.

As the broad disk of the sun was partly hidden by the edge of the hill, three of the labourers were despatched towards Ballybawn by different routes; and, though a disagreeable office at that hour after their day's labour, all cheerfully set off; for their own treatment by the family was of that kind and considerate character which is always experienced by the dependents of truly Christian people.

About the time when the last upward rays of the sun were quenched, and the grey mantle had slowly fallen on the groves, the lawns, the fields, and the river, Theresa was summoned to the parlour; impressive and respectful homage was offered by the suitor, and she took a seat. Her father then commenced his oration, the chief topics of which were Mac Cracken's suit for her hand; his long waiting, his patience and devotedness, Bryan's evident perfidy and apparent flight, his falsehood and ill-conduct for a long time past, the poor spirit she would show by still waiting on his pleasure and fickleness; and, finally, his own earnest wish that she would then and there give her consent to become in some reasonable time the wife of their worthy and devotedly attached guest. This would make some compensation to himself for his great disappointment in Edward's bad progress.

Theresa seemed very little affected by the presence of the suitor, or this appeal to her feelings. She expressed her opinion that "there seemed no need for pressing the suit at that moment, when Mr. Mac Cracken must be aware that a recent occurrence had come on her with surprise and heavy sorrow, as she was not ashamed to acknowledge."

Mr. Mac Cracken assured her "that on paying this visit he was not aware of the morning's adventure; that he would not be hypocrite enough to express more than Christian sorrow for it, if it removed an obstacle to his own long-cherished hopes; that he would not press for a speedy marriage, but would be satisfied with her consent to become his beloved consort in a reasonable period—say a quarter of a year (here a shrinking gesture warned him of the boggy ground he had got on)—or even half a year;

and to have this consent ratified by her estimable parents; said that within his own knowledge couples marrying with love on one side only, and sometimes with no love on either side, turned out most happy, from the good and reasonable characters of the parties; that his friend now present, to whom he was proud to give that valued name, was high in the confidence of a gentleman, who, on learning the ratification of the much-desired union, was prepared to do him very effective service; that he anxiously sighed for a life of domestic repose, unshackled by the continual demands of the gentlemen of the vicinity on his time and services; and finally hoped that Miss O'Brien would not, on this awful turning point of life's destiny, fling him into the abyss of despair by a refusal, and thus render his future days a blank of joyless existence.

Theresa replied—"Mr. Mac Cracken, if the conduct of Bryan Roche cannot be shown to be completely blameless, I here declare that I will be guided by the wishes of my father and mother; but there is no need of hurry. Until his return, or until his own explanation is heard, I will not make any promise or declaration except this, that if he is innocent, as I am nearly certain he must be, and if he still wishes me for his wife, and if I am prevented from being so, I will be wife to no other man."

As she ceased speaking, Joanna's voice was heard from the kitchen chanting a favourite ditty, which, as in the former instance, was intended to serve a good purpose.

"GRA GAL MACHREE.

"I am a young lover that's sorely oppressed;
I'm inthralled by a fair one, and can find no rest;
Her name I'll not mention, though wounded I be
By Cupid's keen arrow—she's *Gra Gal Machree.*

"I promised to tell that fair innocent dove
All by a fond letter that she was my love,
Expecting next morning with pleasure to see
Some token of love from my *Gra Gal Machree.*

"But that false deceiver whom I did intrust—
Above all men breathing he's one of the worst—
He proved a deceiver and traitor to me,
For he ne'er gave my letter to *Gra Gal Machree.*

"When he got the letter he ran out of hand
Unto her stern father, and told him the plan;
When the old man did read it he swore bitterly
That he'd alter the case with his *Gra Gal Machree.*

"He called down his daughter with pride and disdain,
Saying, 'Here is a letter from your darling swain.
You cannot deny him—it's plain you may see—
He titles you here his own *Gra Gal Machree.*'

"This beautiful fair maid fell down on her knees,
Saying, 'Father, dear father, now do as you please:
For if by wild horses I mangled should be,
I'll never deny he's my darling Johnny.'

"A horse was got ready without more delay,
And to some foreign country she was sent away,
But if I don't find her I'll mourn constantly,
And my last dying words shall be, '*Gra Gal Machree.*'"

The sweet but untaught voice gave the lay a sad and complaining character, rendered more affecting by the sorrowful and anxious state of the soul of the singer, and her evident intention to throw an influence over the spirit of her loved mistress. Before she had concluded, the tears were gliding silently down the fair and sorrowful countenance of Theresa. With her hands clasped on her knees, and her head bowed, she seemed unaware of the presence of her father, her suitor, or his blackman.

The song was over, and Theresa still sitting in the same posture, her feelings calmer, and her demeanour resigned, as if she had been soothed by listening to Joanna's melody. Mac Cracken, though seeing but a poor prospect of victory, ventured on another appeal, as success in this project was a matter of great moment to him, for a reason which his friend of the uneasy hands very well knew. He urged the utter impossibility of a good construction being put on Bryan's conduct, and the want of spirit it would show if she waited on his leisure to make excuses. She said she had already expressed her intentions, mentioned the necessity of attending to the needful preparations for Sunday morning, curtsied, and left the room, and Mr. Mac Cracken and his *friend* soon afterwards took their departure—Mr. O'Brien still keeping up their spirits with strong hopes of a success-

ful wooing. The friend was heard by some dawdlers speaking in a rather *unfriendly* tone to our suitor, and showing on his business-furrowed face an expression of decided discontent.

When bed-time arrived the messengers had not yet returned. It had been arranged that if they did not succeed, they should take shelter near the mountain with some acquaintances, in order to be early on the quest on the following morning. At last the two families retired to bed with anxious minds, Mr. Roche spending a longer time than usual at his devotions, and striving to bring his troubled feelings under subjection to the will of Providence.

It was a disturbed and unrefreshing sleep which descended on the senses of most of the members of both households that night. Theresa, her mother, and the parents of the absentee awoke in a frightened state after every snatch of uneasy slumber, and endured severe mental sufferings, till a sort of torpor brought temporary relief, the uncomfortable sleep that ensued continuing to be haunted by a confused and disagreeable succession of images. With morning came the necessity of bodily exertion, and the hope that some certain news would soon arrive; and all felt a kind of relief from the misery of pondering in a state of helpless inaction on the misfortune that had befallen them.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WE GO BACK.

THEY were sitting at breakfast next morning at O'Brien's, some eating as if nothing had happened, others only making pretence, when Joanna, who had slipped out some minutes before, was heard screaming in the yard, and immediately after she was on the floor, shouting out, "Oh, dear mistress! oh, Miss Theresa, such news;" but as it is not an easy matter to get a correct notion of all the parts of an occurrence where four or five people are asking and answering at the same time, we, who afterwards learned the proper

connection of the facts as they occurred, will now proceed to give a distinct outline of them to the reader.

It will be recollected that our young friends, after cutting the hay on the previous Sunday evening, adjourned with their loads to the hay-loft, Sleeveen lying snugly in the stable underneath, and listening with all his might for the interesting communication which he was sure would follow. After a few minutes spent in making themselves snug, and in executing a practical jest or two, Edward began to state his case, which we give, minus interruptions and other incidental drawbacks.

"Our marriage is appointed for Sunday next, and under the circumstances in which I am placed, I wish to have everything done as quietly as possible. I shall leave this place in the morning at an early hour, and get to Graigue in time for Mass, if I cannot reach my friend's house near the Barrow on Saturday evening. We shall return home next day through Scollagh, the same happy path we once before trod together. A few of my most friendly neighbours in my present place of business will receive us, and welcome my bride to her humble home; humble enough it is, but happy I hope it will also be. I should have told you that her sister, who seems to love her very much, is to be at the marriage, both with her own and Eliza's wishes. She is to set out from Enniscorthy on Saturday; and either of you must join her about Moneyhore or Courtnacuddy, and conduct her over the White Mountain till you meet the road that leads from Scollagh to Graigue. Eliza and her friend will meet her before she reaches the bridge. I can't ask Harry, for he is too small to act as a lady's guardian, and besides I'm afraid he might fall in love with her; and at his age that would be inconvenient. I would not require the services of any of you but that I have two hours' work to do in every five minutes from this till Saturday afternoon.

Charles.—I am sorry, Ned, that I cannot perform the pleasant task you have laid out for me; for Mr. Larkin has cut out such a job for us, slaves of the spade, next week, that a pretty question in compound proportion might be formed from it, thus: 'If one man is required to do duty

for two, and if five minutes are allowed to do the work of two hours, and if fifteen boys enter the garden on next Monday morning, how many will be disabled on Saturday night?' No, no; Bryan is the man. His turf clamp is getting low; he can yoke his car and creel, and go for a load to some of the farmers of Ballybawn or Ballygibbon, and give the young lady a good hay cushion in the vehicle. He will leave his horse and car at his patron's, the man of turf, and see his charge over the mountain, to where his rough road crosses the other, and then return home, weary, but cheered by having done a threefold duty.

Bryan.—You arrange a troublesome matter with very great ease, Master Charles. Pray what will Biddy *Goodin* and Moll the Smith think and say when they see or hear of me marching off in the morning with a young woman in my company? And if it come to the ears of your mother or Theresa, can you engage that they will think nothing of it?

Edward.—Bah! I'll tell Theresa before I set out to-morrow; and what need you then care for any gossip in the neighbourhood for a day or two?

Bryan.—I tell you again that it is no joking matter. It is easy to break a small gap in the dam of a pond, but it is very far from easy to close it up again when the flood widens it, and is destroying the nice little garden lower down. Still we must see her safe 'over the hills and far away.' But how? That's the job. Musha, Ned, I'm afraid you'll try the patience of your friends in the course of time. Like *Falstaff* that yourself and Charley are so fond of quoting, you are not only inclined to do rash things, but you are the cause of others doing them along with you. How shall we manage, Charley, to keep Biddy and Moll in the dark; aye, and Sleeveen into the bargain?

At this sensible question, the worthy Sleeveen, snugly ensconced in his pew down stairs, grinned from ear to ear, rubbed his elbows with his lazy palms, and chuckled as I have seen a dumb boy chuckle while exhibiting a stolen egg which he was preparing to suck; and Charley finally proposed this amendment to his original rough draft. Bryan would engage Bridget Foley to meet Miss Richards

near Moneyhore about six o'clock in the morning, and bring her through the village of Rathnure, above which he would relieve her of her charge, and pilot the wanderer through the remaining intricacies of the journey. This meeting-place being out of Bryan's immediate neighbourhood, and also on a lonesome road, the gossips of the next village would either be ignorant of the circumstance, or would not have time to speed the news to Castleboro till all danger was past.

In consequence of Bryan's adjurations to Edward, he attempted twice or thrice to speak to Theresa before the family retired to bed; for, in order to be at work at a timely hour next day, he intended to set out before any one in the house would be stirring. He was foiled, however, by the watchfulness of his father; and being one of those in the compass of whose minds there is no perspective, he omitted to leave a line or message for her. His thoughts were so occupied with his approaching union and the necessary preparations, that the whole foreground of the picture was filled, and no vista or opening left through which Bryan's interests might be visible in the distance. On Wednesday, however, he recalled the matter; and selecting a trusty lad from among his pupils, he induced him to undertake the journey to Castleboro with the following letter to his sister:—

"Dear Theresa,

"I am to be married (with God's favour) on Sunday next. I cannot leave this place till Saturday afternoon; and meantime am obliged to call on Bryan for his friendly assistance in seeing the sister of my dear Eliza safe across the mountain on Saturday forenoon on her road to Graigue; for it is entirely out of my power to accompany her, as every instant of my time is urgently needed here till the afternoon. Bryan was very unwilling to accept this commission, for fear of its being so represented by Sleeveen or some charitable neighbour as to cause another misunderstanding, but I told him I would explain all in the mean time. It was not done on Sunday night, either because I was hindered in some way, or that my heart and

mind were entirely engrossed with my own imminent affair; for you know my constitutional defect of not being able to do one thing, and *not* neglect another at the same time. I feel only an imperfect pleasure in my approaching union, as I cannot have the immediate gratification of making you and my mother acquainted with one that is so dear to me. My father's decided objection prevents me of course from presenting her to my family; and I fear that my mother and yourself are rather prejudiced against my choice. We will return through Scollagh on Monday morning; and the first market day you can fix on we will meet you in town; and I engage you will begin to love and esteem her as I am sure she deserves. I unfortunately indulged in works of fiction at too early a period of my life, and have continued the practice but too steadily ever since. My mind and heart were filled with ideas of pure love, constancy, knightly faith, &c., till the thought of life without loving and being loved by some amiable girl became intolerable. I fear that under the same circumstances I would repeat the same conduct if I were free to-morrow. Hoping to have the pleasure of entertaining yourself, and my mother, and Bryan, my dear brother in affection, under our humble roof before long, and warning you, as you value your future peace, not to let a shadow of distrust interfere between Bryan and yourself again,

"I am," &c.

As the messenger did not appear again in school for the rest of the week, Edward felt pretty easy about the safe delivery of his letter. It was not, however, forwarded in time to prevent mischief. The boy was kept at home during the next two days, to assist in some necessary work; and when he arrived at O'Brien's on Saturday, neither of the women could avail themselves of what would have restored comfort to their afflicted spirits. It was just as they were retiring to Theresa's room after dinner, that Sleeveen, who was on the watch, spied the young messenger as he entered the bawn with the letter in his hand. He made a sign to the master of the house, who managed to intercept his entrance, and prevent any communication

with Joanna or the other inmates. Pretending that the women were out of the way, and expressing his sorrow that he had nothing just then at hand to offer him to eat, he took charge of the fatal note, overcoming the boy's scruples by handing him a *fi'-penny-bit* to get get some refreshment in Kaim, and seeing him well off the premises before he let him out of his sight.

Sleeveen being aware of the time and place of the expected meeting, contrived to have himself sent to Joanna's house on this fatal morning, and to have her brother Garrett an unwilling witness of Bryan's apparent treachery.

Our luckless hero had not yet made up his mind as to the explanation he ought to give Tom, when they were joined in the lonely road by Biddy Foley and Eliza's sister. This young lady was possessed of good looks, but as I afterwards found, on comparing Edward's and Bryan's descriptions, her face had not the soft sweet character of her sister's. Her countenance shewedmore shrewdness, there was more of self-confidence in her carriage, and Bryan was not a little puzzled as to the ways and means of keeping up a conversation for the four or five miles they had to travel together.

He cordially shook hands with her on being introduced by Biddy, and expressed the pleasure it gave him to be serviceable to her in any way ; and she thanked him for his obligingness in a voice which was not surpassed in sweetness even by that of her sister. Some observations were made on the beauty of the morning ; she was pitied for the fatigue of her long walk ; and Bryan insisted on her taking a seat in the car among the soft hay, whilst he walked alongside, and kept up a conversation whenever the lumbering wheels of the vehicle were not engaged in violent disputes with the stones or ruts of the road. When they compared notes on the intended match, their views as to its unsuitableness were in surprising accordance. She considered that her sister had conformed very heedlessly to a strange creed, and that if she had done so to please her lover, one or both would most likely be sorry for it some day. Whilst Bryan agreed to the principle, he begged her to take comfort in the consideration that all

the essential points of Christian doctrine held by Eliza from her childhood were the same as those held by the man to whom she would become united. All the Apostles' Creed would be still her own, and instead of losing any consoling Christian gifts she would acquire additional ones. Then went on a nice little discussion, not by any means a bitter one; no, no! how could it be bitter when kept up by a pretty young woman sitting comfortably in the car of her opponent, and that opponent as fine a specimen of a young farmer as could be met with from Ross to Enniscorthy, and who, for the moment, was doing all he could for her accommodation. They continued it for some time, until they found, as most generally happens, that no progress was made on either hand towards the conversion of the other, and then an amicable truce was agreed to; and being now past the village where the tribe of Forrestals were so pleasantly located among their orchards and cabbage gardens, and where the village green is sheltered by a few fine old trees; and coming out on the Ross road near the chapel, Bryan insisted that his fair charge should partake of some refreshment at Mrs. Hand's before she tried the perilous pass of Mam-a-Chuala.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE SCHOOL OF RATHNURE.

Bryan was obliged to use some pressing to effect this movement, but it was at length effected, and a cheerful breakfast of bread, butter, and tea was got ready by the obliging landlady. He made a shew of sharing the breakfast, and entertained his guest by some passages of his boyish days spent in the adjoining chapel yard. The master, Diarmuidh K., he said, was the strongest man he ever knew, though not much above the middle height, and unable to bend one of his knees. He once carried a weight of forty-eight stone from the quay of Ross into a ship which was lying alongside. At the time of his being at school a devout female pilgrim was passing through the neighbourhood. He recollected seeing her one day in

school comparing the girth of her arm with that of the master; but he doubted whether devout females did well in entering into such comparisons with strong, handsome young fellows like Mr. Diarmuidh; and Miss Richards entered very decidedly into Bryan's views on this particular head. Judging that a few more of the circumstances of school life at Rathnure than were detailed to Miss Richards on this occasion would be worth offering our readers, we shall now relieve Bryan for a while from his office of local chronicler.

The handsome young schoolmaster having a natural turn for literature in his youth, performed a pilgrimage to some place near Clogheen, and acquired a reasonable share of a schoolmaster's stock in trade, particularly a good knowledge of grammar, at the school of a certain Mr. Blundell. He was under no fear for diet and lodging. The children of the surrounding farmers contended for the honour and pleasure of having him as an inmate of their houses for as long as he might be left with them. Of course he made a return, by helping the young folk to prepare their lessons for the ensuing day, and it is said that Mr. Blundell's school was distinguished for the finish and excellence of the grammatical instruction given in it.

Our master, furnished with his Munster diploma, having returned home, commenced his labours in a small house in the corner of the chapel-yard of Rathnure, in the month of February, when the intense cold of winter was supposed to be a little mollified. There was only a few pupils in the beginning, but the number gradually increased till the daily attendance varied between sixty and one hundred in the height of summer. The inmates did not confine themselves to the house at that season, but took shelter under the trees in the yard; the elder lads studying "Hawney's Mensuration" and "Jackson's Book-keeping," and being permitted the use of the altar-steps in the chapel, on which to copy their ledgers, &c. As soon as reaping commenced there was a withdrawal of three-fourths of the pupils, some of whom re-assembled when the harvest labours were over, and continued till a few weeks before

Christmas. From the breaking up which then occurred till about the middle of February, the master held night schools here and there through the parish; from ten to twenty neighbouring boys assembling round the big kitchen or parlour table of some farm-house, and delving away at their lessons till the big pot of potatoes was strained, which was about half-past nine o'clock on these occasions.

The Rathnure School was, in the extent of its accommodations, one step higher than the unsophisticated hedge-school, in which the seats consisted of stones covered with dry *scraws*, or sods. It had *some* wooden seats, though it had not reached the dignity of a table. There was a single chair for the master's use; and his first occupation, on taking possession of it in the morning, after hearing the tasks, was to make or mend the pens of all who had attained to the dignity of the writing class. The paper used was the ordinary "pott" in its native length, unruled, and stitched in a brown paper cover. Every praiseworthy pupil in the writing class had an ink-bottle hung to a button by a leather strap, a white-lead pencil, and a ruler. As regards those advanced lads, varying from thirteen to twenty years of age, who were learning arithmetic, book-keeping, or mensuration, they fell to their own exercises as soon as they entered the school. The master set a *sum* in the books of those learning the primary rules; the pupil did it to the best of his ability, and then submitted it for inspection.

While the writing exercise is going forward, the master begins with the undergraduates, from the tyros in the alphabet to those who had just begun to read; and it was a strict rule that no one should attempt a reading exercise till he could master the spelling of the longest words in the "Universal," viz., those in the column distinguished by the sesquipedalian *Antitrinitarians* and *Coessentiality*, which were uniformly pronounced by the students of that day, "Antherentaárians" and "cozentiality" (both *t*'s hard). Every child came up to the master's side in succession, made a bow or a curtsy, and repeated his or her alphabet or reading lesson, making another bow at the end. The master occasionally strolled round the ring of writers

to see how that business was speeding. When half the page was covered there was a suspension; and, after inspection, all the copy-books were laid in a pile till the afternoon.

The writers now seized their reading-books, or opened their "Universal Spelling-book" at the "Town fearing a Siege," or "Tommy and Harry," and read over the next lesson to be said; and the entire corps, with the exceptions already mentioned, came up one after the other, and read from chance-provided books, the attack on the Enchanted Castle, Reynard inducing the bear to catch the fish with his tail while the lake is rapidly freezing, Clarissa Harlowe's escape with Lovelace, one of the cunning tricks of "*Cahir na Capail*" (Charley of the Horse, *i.e.*, horsestealer), or some wise aphorisms from the "Pleasant Art of Money-Catching." The ordinary business was occasionally interrupted by the entrance of four or five boys and girls, all of the same village, brothers and sisters, and near cousins. We witnessed the following introductory ceremony more years ago than we care to count:—

Master.—Well, my brave boy—coming to make an entrance, I suppose?

Spokesboy (putting his hand to his thick and only partially combed locks).—Yes, sir.

Master.—Well; let me know your names and where you live.

Spokesboy.—Yes, sir. We all live in the village there beyant, and we're first cousins. This is Watt's Garrett, and that's Jack's Garrett; this is Watt's Mauyeen, and that's Jack's Mauyeen; here's Dickey, an' I'm Raymon (Redmond).

Another interruption was caused by Dr. Kelly, or some neighbouring wag or humourist, who was generally a good-natured fellow; and his entry was greeted by a universal grin, for the "rehearsing" might be fearlessly suspended for the next half hour.

"Well, masther, how's the boys and girls going on, and what state is the rod in? Won't you call me to hold up John Dunne the next time he desarves a hoising (John was the quietest boy in the school)? I'm sure, master, Nick Bowes there is a good singer."

"How do you know?"

"Ah, look at the fine lark's heel he has." (A roar of laughter, in which Nick does not join.) "Pat Doyle is high in the golden rule. Tell me, Pat, what is the price of a car-load of turnips at three ha'pence a bunch?"

A pause, till one of Pat's neighbours answers, "Sure, sir, you ought to tell him how many bunches wor in the car."

"An' if I did, what credit would he have for doing the sum? Now, because you are so smart, I'll give you the next question. If a snail goes four feet every day up a pole twenty feet high, and comes down eight feet at night, how long will it be till he gets to the top?"

Hasty Pupil.—Five days, sir [and a lusty roar shakes the house].

"Now, Richard Jekyl (Richard was an innocent little fellow of seven), show me your primer. (Reads)—"A—black—hen—lays—white—eggs." "Very true, very true! Well, Richard, what coloured eggs does a white hen lay?"

Richard (off his guard).—Black, sir. (Another laugh.)

"Indeed, Richard, if she doesn't, she ought, if we are to go by the primer." Then addressing himself to an overgrown lad of thirteen, "*Lahy* (Leahy), what lesson are you in?"

"Faith, sir, I'm in *The Dog*, and it's a very hard place."

"Very hard, I believe. Well, *Christy Paudh Mogue* (Christopher, son of Pat, son of Moses), are *you* as far as *The Dog* or *The Magpie* yet?"

"Indeed, sir, I amn't."

"Well, well, where are you?"

"Musha, sir, I'm only in the A-b-abs."

"In the A-b-abs! and how many years are you coming here all the way from Ballybawn?"

"Four, sir."

"Oh, *Vuya, Vuya!* what in the world is the reason you can't get on?"

"I declare to you, sir, what I larn in the summer I forget before the school opens again, herding the sheep and goats, and looking after the turf." Christy lived on the White Mountain common.

"Now, arithmeticians, I must examine you, and there will be no joke about it. If the penny loaf weighs a pound when wheat is thirty shillings a barrel, what weight will it be when the same wheat is twice as dear?" A few blurted out "two pounds," but some who were not in such a hurry came at the right solution.

"If Tom, and Jack, and Pat would each reap a field in two days, working by himself, what time would they require if all set together at it?" Here was another pitfall, into which one or two fell who were for keeping them at it for six days.

"Now mind yourselves. Lahy there lent Christy a rick of hay forty feet long, forty feet broad, and forty feet high, one year; and the next year Christy returned Lahy two ricks, each twenty feet long, twenty feet broad, and twenty feet high. Was Christy an honest man in that affair?" Many were of opinion that if Christy had no other crime on his conscience, he need be in no hurry to go to confession. But Dr. Kelly, having a large potato in his pocket, took it, and fashioned a two-inch cube out of it. Then by two downward middle cuts and one level one he turned out eight inch-cubes, and Christy was found guilty of having paid only five shillings in the pound. This demonstration excited considerable interest.

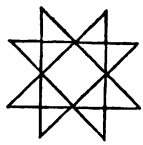
"Now, boys," said the volunteer teacher, "take slates and *cutters* (pencils), and write out this word:

> "Three-fourths of a cross, and a circle complete,
> Two semicircles, and a perpendicular meet.
> Then set a triangle on two feet,
> Two semicircles and a circle complete."

One or two of the clear-headed fellows employed at Hawney's Mensuration made out the word. We will give our readers a hint that it is an excisable article.

"Now, my brave Throjans, if you learn as much as this every day, it's starting for Trinity College you'll be in a year or two, but don't *hollow!* till you're out of the wood. Make a square on your slates. Mark a point in the middle of every side of it. Draw a line from every one of these points to the points next it, and continue these lines out-

wards as far as you please. Continue the sides of the square outwards till they meet these lines. Rub out the useless ends of the slant lines. Very well. Now, how many lines have you altogether?" Those who had drawn the figure accurately answered "eight."



"That's only the beginning of your trouble. Now take seven little bits of paper or straw in your hands. Put a bit of paper at one end of any line. Now put a bit at the end of any line that does not run to that point. Next a bit at one end *only* of every line that has not got one yet at either end. Here's a halfpenny, now, to every man that has seven pieces laid down." Alas! after several trials, the utmost number of angles covered by papers was five.

"Well, I suppose I must leave you to be guessing at it till I come again. And now I'll be off after you get this question copied down, and maybe I won't do anything for whoever shows it clear and cleanly made up this day-week:—

"A man there was that bought a horse,
And he was lean and poor,
One guinea sterling was his price,
And five bright shillings more.
He fed this horse on hay and oats
Until he got right sound;
And meeting with another chap,
He sold him for five *pound*.
One half he lost of his prime cost,
One-fourth his keeping too;
What did his fodder stand him in?
What did he lose? say you."

"And, now, any boy that can find the answer to that may be doing this little one while he is resting himself:—

"Money lent at five per cent
To those who choose to borrow;
What time shall I be worth a pound,
If I lend a crown to-morrow?"

"Now, master, I must make some amends to these brave boys and girls for keeping them idle so long; so I'll expect to find every son and daughter of them at the orchard-gate next Saturday at half-past twelve o'clock, to see if they like the taste of the apples this year." (*Exit*, amid a joyful buzz.)

The second and third lessons proceeded with no variation from the first. If the teacher was a conscientious man, he was little exposed to suffer from ennui. He would not think of letting his little kingdom disperse to dinner, either with their families or Duke Humphrey, without giving every individual three lessons. But if he was not tired, many a little man and woman was. He or she had no variety of occupation. It was only spelling a column from top to bottom, or reading a bit of "Brown, Jones, and Robinson in danger of being drowned;" or a few of the grave platitudes of the "Economy of Human Life." And when the end of the column or half page of reading was reached, the poor child would be spelling or reading the same thing over again, or talking in a low tone to the next neighbours, right and left. Yes; there was one little oasis in this desert—getting leave to go out. According to the number of pupils there was a provision of passes, consisting generally of the thigh-bones of calves or sheep. The moment a promenader appeared at the door with one of these after his refreshing excursion, there was a subdued fight waged by two or three urchins for the emblem of relaxation. The boy who by craft or force was victor came before the master, and either gave him a military salute with the weapon, or uttered the unvarying "Sir, may I go out?" and according to character and circumstances he was refused or gratified.

Another relaxation of a partially disagreeable nature was the public examination of a delinquent, and occasional *hoising*. This extreme case the writer seldom witnessed; but no doubt it was not an uncommon occurrence where the teacher had not his temper well under command. Sometimes an obdurate little delinquent would, according to school tradition—we never witnessed the enormity—keep a pin in his mouth, and while the birch was doing

duty, and he was in agony, stick it into the neck of the unfortunate youth who acted as *horse* in the exciting little drama. Of course a boxing match at play-hours would occasionally be the sequel.

Alas! as we write, a third cause of relief to the jaded spirits of the pupils comes before us. An old acquaintance of the master, or some one who wishes his child to be taken particular care of, pays a visit. "And by this and by that we won't stir a foot till you just come in with us to Mrs. Hand's, and take share of a pot of mulled beer or a tumbler of punch." Our lame friend having no particular love for the pint or glass, seldom accepted the invitation; but many a brother of the birch could be "over-persuaded;" and then riot and idleness prevailed—not for the five minutes the master promised to be away, but during the two hours he was actually absent. Some one of the elder boys would on such an occasion be appointed lieutenant, but he could badly stem the tide of conversation, fisty-cuffing, playing *Walls of Troy* or *Fox and Goose* on slates, games of marbles, or any other games in vogue.

The relaxation last alluded to was dearly purchased. The master on his return would, if elevated, make a drunken oration to his tittering pupils, and give them liberty for the rest of the day; or if he happened to have reached the quarrelsome stage of his *element*, would give a general sweep of the rod, thrash a few individuals, and end with falling asleep on his chair.

But the *class* hour has arrived; every one qualified is standing in a curve; and the younger children, released from surveillance, amuse themselves in corners with straws, or pebbles, or slate-and-cutter games of "Fox and Goose," or "Walls of Troy." The pupils retained the places they held last on the previous evening, or their position was determined by numbers written on folded bits of paper, and distributed by the master. He then passed round, and every boy and girl provided with a brass pin laid it in the half-closed book which he held in hand. He then gave out the first word in the column, which the head boy or girl attempted to spell and explain. If unsuccessful, the next in rank made the attempt. Whoever succeeded

took first place, and thus the exercise proceeded till a couple of columns were spelled through, or the same column was analyzed two or three times, and then came the tug of war.

The queen, *i. e.* the boy or girl second in rank, proposed to the "king" the most out-of-the-way word he or she could remember from the columns of the "Universal," or Entick's, or Jones's oblong little "*dixhenry.*" If the "king" spelled the word correctly and told its meaning, he was safe so far, and then the "prince," the third in the rank, tried him in the same way. If he failed, he was obliged to propose to prince, or Raymond, or Garrett, or Mauyaidh—in fact, whoever conquered him—a word to be treated in the same way. If the subject was successful, he was subject no more. He at once assumed the throne, though still liable to defeat from all who stood below his former place. If the very last was lucky in defeating the latest in possession, he succeeded to the crown, and (which was equally acceptable) the heap of pins, minus three, two of which consoled the queen, and one the prince.

Great was the triumph of the little boy who won the pins: he could treat mother, sister, aunt, or little sweetheart with these useful implements. Whatever may be thought of the share the pins had in the matter, no plan could have been more effectual in making good spellers.

Nothing now remained but Catechism. It was then only twelve or thirteen years after the rebellion of 1798, yet a neighbourly spirit pervaded the intercourse of Protestants and Roman Catholics; and the young people of the old *Palentine* (Palatine) families—the Whitneys, the Deacons, and others—resorted to the "academy," as the master enjoyed a good reputation for care and ability.

Catechism hour having arrived, the master arranged his pupils in the chapel-yard when the school was at its throngest, and went through about half of "Devereux's Manual," then in use in the diocese of Ferns. The eldest or gravest of the Protestant children *heard* the whole of the comparatively short Church Catechism. We are not prepared to deny that when there was no suitable teacher for them, one of the oldest Catholic boys performed the

ceremony, but our recollection on this point is misty and confused.

At last all are dismissed, and they separate in small detachments, one taking the eastern road to Gurrawn, one the road to Kilanne, on the Ross road, and another the field path up Cnoc-na-Cro. The master is invited to pass the night in a farmer's house, say in Tomenine; and he and all the youths and maidens going in the same direction enjoy a pleasant walk. The cares of the day being over, and the sun now not very high over the White Mountain, all past grievances are forgotten, and every one is prepared to enjoy the present relaxation enhanced by the delightful evening. Magisterial dignity is laid aside; the children shout and chase one another, or hold pleasant chat round him. Recollections of such evening returns seem to them in after days like glimpses of some lost Eden.

Breakfast being over, Bryan and his fair companion resumed their journey, Bryan taking an opportunity of entering the adjoining chapel in the interim, to say a prayer or two. As they were proceeding along the Ross road, Miss Richards cordially commended the custom amongst Catholics, of leaving open their places of worship for the convenience of devout souls, who wish to withdraw themselves from the cares of the world for a few moments, and hold communion with their Creator.

Bryan.—In towns and cities they have much advantage over us who live in country places: for here you often have to search for the key if you wish to go into a chapel. There is a pretty little story common among us, which, whether it is true or not, induces us when passing chapels to enter and pray, if it was only for half a minute.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE GOOD BOY AND THE ENVIOUS BOY.

"THERE was once a lord and a lady, and they had two servant boys. One of them was a fine innocent young fellow whom everybody was fond of; and the other was an

envious *ounkraan*, who begrudged all about him the very air they breathed. The lady was very kind to the good young boy because he was so well disposed, and because her little son and daughter were so fond of him. The bad boy was always striving to buz into the lord's head some mistrust of his comrade; and at last, as they were coming home from hunting, a devilish grin came on his face as he pointed to where the lady was standing in the garden, and the page holding her hand in both his own, and his mouth down on it. Well, the lord was astonished you may be sure, and his face became like a coal. He said nothing, but walked up to his room without speaking to any one.

"Now there was a foundry on his estate, and there he rode in the cool of the evening. He went into the room where the great furnace was, and said he to the two men that were minding it, 'If any one comes to you to-morrow morning, and asks you from me if the job I gave you is done, take him and pitch him into the red fire before you.'—'Oh Lord, sir, what has he done?'—'If he wasn't worthy of death, I wouldn't be here to give this order.'—'Your lordship, it shall be done.'

"Next morning says he to the young boy, 'Go down to the foundry, and ask the two men that are minding the fire, if the job I gave them is finished?' The page wished for nothing better. The sun was shining, and he'd have a delightful walk through the meadows and the wood. So he went on, the birds singing in the trees, and he singing along with them out of innocence and a light heart. The meadows brought him to the wood, and he had to go more than two miles across it to come out on the road on the other side, and there was the foundry. After he was half a mile into it, he bethought him of a piece of advice his mother gave him when he was leaving home, and that was—never to take a short cut while he had the high road to travel by.

"Back he turned to where a cross path led out to the road on the left. About the time he got out on the road, his wicked comrade (who had heard of his lord's order to the men at the foundry, and was eager to see if it was obeyed) was entering the wood by the same way that he was taking at first, and kept walking along very smart,

but not so smart as to overtake the good boy if he hadn't turned back.

"While the good boy was going along without hurrying himself, he came up to a little chapel by the roadside, and he did not pass it without going in to say some prayers. For that was another parting advice his mother gave him, never to pass by a chapel that was open, without going in and performing some devotion. Mass was just beginning, and he thought for the short time it would hold it wasn't worth his while to go out. So he joined earnestly in the devotion, and when it was over he stepped out rather quick to make up for the delay. When he came to the furnace he asked the men if the job their lord gave them the day before was done. 'Oh, faith it is so,' said the wickedest looking of the two, and he put the devil's grin on him, and pointed to the furnace. Though he didn't understand him, he didn't like his looks nor his tones; so he turned round, and set off as smart as he could.

"The lord was sitting in his hall, rather troubled in mind, long after the young boy left the house. He began to be afraid that he had been too hasty. It might be all innocent enough, he thought; my wife might be after doing something for himself or his mother, and that's the way he was showing his gratitude. I was very wrong. There is no more than suspicion after all. He called the first servant that was passing. 'Go and call *So-and-So*' (naming the wicked boy)—— 'Sir, I saw him going the same way that the widow's son took after you gave him some directions.' 'How long after?' 'About half an hour.' Just at that moment in came the lady of the house, and she made a sign to the servant to go out.

"She then held over her hand that had a sore on it to her husband, and said with such a pious and grateful air on her features, 'Oh, my dear husband, how happy I am, and how glad you'll be to hear of the escape I had yesterday! While myself and the children and the widow's son were walking in the garden, I was pulling a flower, and a snake darted on my hand and bit it. Oh, so frightened as I was! But the poor boy ran and caught it, and sucked away at the wound, spitting out every now and then. The

doctor was luckily in the castle, and the moment I could draw my hand from the poor boy's mouth, and get to my room, I had him brought. Well, he said nothing could be better than what the poor child did; but to make sure he put some caustic to it. He said he couldn't be sure whether there would be any danger till to-day. I did not tell you all along for fear of afflicting you; but the doctor saw it just now, and said there was no danger whatever. Oh, aren't you glad?'

"Neither I nor any one could describe the torment he endured while his wife was speaking. His face was frightful to see. As his lady stopped he sprung up like a madman and was rushing out, when the door opened and there was the boy he thought burned to a cinder, full of life and sprightliness, before him, and his face so rosy after his walk. Only there was a chair at hand he'd have fallen on the floor. There he sat without saying a word or raising his eyes for a quarter of an hour, feeling a deadly sickness inside of himself, and as if his brain was going to burst. His lady and the page were terribly frightened; but he made signs to them to be quiet, and at last came to himself.

"When he was able to question the young boy, and heard all he could tell, and saw no sign of the envious creature making his appearance, he guessed how it came about, and saw the hand of God in the rescue of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty.

"He was up to this time a passionate and selfish sort of man, fond of worldly pleasures of all kinds; but a great reformation took place in him from that day. He acknowledged to his wife the whole thing from beginning to end, and while he lived he lamented the doom of the unhappy informer."

Miss Richards acknowledged that it was a nice little story; but said that she had not the pleasure of knowing many young boys so innocent or well-intentioned as the page.

CHAPTER XXXV.

BROILS AND TRAGEDIES AMONG NEIGHBOURS.

THERE was no lack of subjects for conversation as they proceeded. Bryan, casting his eyes up the mountain, caught sight of an object on which to hang a tale, and said to Miss Richards, "Can you see the large white house to the left of that straggling street that runs out on the common? It stands by itself, and belongs to a gentleman-farmer from the barony of Forth: the people of the country here call him 'the Barony.' He had four brave young fellows for sons; and several years since they were set on as they came out from Mass by a clan that they had some disagreement with. I believe that the enemy did not bring their sticks inside the chapel. They were furnished with them outside, and they fell on the father and sons when they appeared, as if it was thrashing corn they were. However, they had not all the sport to themselves, for the others soon wrested sticks out of their hands, and fought like lions, and leathered them right and left. I'll never forget one of the young fellows getting his back to the wall of the chapel yard, and keeping off four or five of his assailants, till an old thief with his two legs in the grave, as you might say, got on the wall over him, and struck at him with a long wattle. Poor Father Murphy heard the uproar before he was entirely unvested. You may be sure he made what haste he could; and only for the wonders he performed with voice and whip, and the help he got from the sensible portion of the congregation, neither the poor Barony nor his sons would ever more eat a bit of the world's bread."

Miss Richards shuddered, and expressed an opinion that if these wicked men had been in the habit of reading their Bible daily, they never would have committed such a detestable action. Bryan, who knew all the trouble good Father James had taken with them in the way of private advice, sermons, and solemn exhortations in confession, shook his head on hearing the remark, for he was better acquainted with the bitterness of some country feuds.

Our travellers were now turning from the lower road to

the upper one that runs nearly parallel to it; and Bryan pointed out the abode of Darby Luke, and mentioned what a trial his backwardness in catechism had been to Father Murphy. As they proceeded up the lane, Bryan, still acting as showman to the district, mentioned that the hill up which they were proceeding was called *Cnoc-na-Cro*, probably from the fact of its summit having been adorned with a gallows in the good old times. "The name," he observed, "has been enshrined in the *caoine* of a poor woman who lived by the side of the road we have just left. Her little child was laid out to be waked, and she *caoined* away, interrupting her sorrowful song at intervals to notice occurrences taking place round her, or to greet visitors as they entered, something like this:—

"Ah, Philippeen alanna? you are lying white enough on the table. Wouldn't you be glad if you knew it, to see the good neighbours thronging to your wake! Yes, indeed, *Shebale.* As I was telling you, the old man left her everything, from the high-standing bed down to the *puttha beg, 'sa puttha mor, 'sa yarra futtha;* and still she wasn't satisfied; and she was as down in the mouth as I am to-night, and my Philippeen gone. Oh, Philippeen *ackudh!* if I had staid at home, and minded you myself, you'd be alive and hearty to-night maybe. Oh, *millia molloch,* what will I do for you at all, at all! Ah, *Cauth asthore, put it here* [give me your hand]. How is every rope's length of you? Ah, *Whitefoot!* you may *yowl* and cry for poor Philippeen; you'll never more run your could nose up again his face. And to think of that envious servant boy of Mogue Murphy's saying that poor Whitefoot used to be killing his sheep at night; and *it* his own thief of a dog that was doing it, all the time! For didn't John Kennedy see him early in the morning in the valley running up the little stream from Father Murphy's; and what was he doing do you think? Shovelling his bloody muzzle through the grass, just as wise as a Christian, while the dew was heavy on it.

"But when I went to *Cruc*-na-Cro',
To get a nurse for my Philippeen oh:

When I came home I got Philippeen dead.
Philippeen oh' *a hagur!*
Blackfoot oh! and Whitefoot *a gra gal,*
Don't yez see poor Philippeen on the table?"
&c., &c., &c.

Bryan being, in a sense, conscientious in small matters, did not inflict any more of this olla on his audience; but remarked that the poor child seemed to have been highly favoured in being removed to happiness from the training which might naturally be expected from his impulsive, gossipping parent. They were now emerging upon the upper road, and had on the right a fine view of Blackstairs, and of the house and groves of Grange lying warm and sheltered on its southern side. Before them and to their left lay the long slope of the White Mountain, darkened by the patches of black mould where turf had been cut away among the purple-flowered heath and grey rocks. Between it and the ridge on which they stood foamed the Boro, its waters stained dark brown with turf mould, and churned into froth by the numerous large stones in its bed. The green and brown fields below the common, the farm-houses with their bawns sheltered by elder shrubs, the long straggling village of Ballybawn, the Carlow road emerging from it, and stretching like a grey ribbon along the green and purple side of the slope,—all lay as in a finely coloured picture before them, smiling in the sunlight, and appearing livelier from a patch or two of shadow flung from a fleecy cloud overhead.

About six years before the occurrence of these incidents, and on a fine afternoon in summer, great sheets of water burst out in various places from the side of this hill, and, rushing down the slope, formed a flood in the valley. We could see from Coolbawn the flashing surfaces of the broad torrents as they issued from the hill-side, and they were visible even at Courtnacuddy. One of our companions was crossing on the stepping-stones at the end of Father Murphy's garden, when he saw, as he thought, a mountain of water rushing down upon him; but it was still some distance away, and it was God's will that he should escape.

The damage done to the crops and hay-ricks that adjoined the river was very great indeed; turf-clamps were swept away; and blocks of bog-wood, the size of a small room, were found along the stony bed of the river below the bridge of Tomenine, after they had spread terror among the lookers-on, while thundering down with the gloomy flood.

As the travellers came down to the Crooked Bridge, Bryan resumed his "tales of the times of old" as follows:

"You see a lane winding up through the fields on the left of the street of Ballybawn, till it ends at the open common. A little house stands just where the waste and the cultivated lands join; and that house once contained a volume of the *Arabian Nights*, for the loan of which your brother (that is to be) set out from home one Sunday afternoon. The volume had been lent by one of our neighbours to the mountaineer; and as no one ever yet returned a borrowed story-book, Edward took the shortest mode of getting the treasure into his possession. Ah, how he used to dwell on the rapture which the sight of the sheep-skin cover gave him. And though it was sunset when he turned his face homewards, he read while he had light, as he paced easily along, and thought but little of the fatigue or the darkness that overtook him.

"The owner of the book, which was in four volumes, had lent another volume to one of the Breens of Curraghgraigue, and as it might be returned at soonest in about seven years, Ned started after it on another holiday. He went through the village of Kaim, got into the forest of Kilaughrim, crossed it, waded the Urrin, previously removing his shoes and stockings, and found on reaching the house that the book was in Forrestalstown, just at his own bawn-gate; and there sure enough he got it next day."

After descanting a while on the great inconveniences and the little advantage arising from a habit of romantic reading, Bryan's discourse was about to languish, when, casting a lucky glance in the direction of Templeudigan, he was reminded of a fearful tragedy which had occurred some time before in the townland of Ballindonny. "It is

a sad thing, Miss Richards," said he, "when the upper and lower classes in a country are of different races and religions, and when one of them traces their line from the conquerors and the other from the conquered, and neither seems disposed to forget the past, but still keeps up unkind and unchristian feelings. I have seen monkeys in a caravan at Enniscorthy; and when any one out of kindness handed them bread or fruit, some of them would snap at the giver's hand, and tear it if they could, out of spite for the bad treatment they had got from former visitors. Why should we imitate them? If the descendants of the persecutors of our great, great grandfathers forget old feuds, and stretch out their hands in friendship to us, are we to refuse them? They have never wronged us, and they wish to repair as far as they can the injury done us by their sires.

"Now, there was a gentleman that took some land on the side of the mountain here, beyond that spur on the left, in a townland called Ballindonny. His name was Loftus Frizelle. He had been a captain in the king's troops in '98'; and was twice near being shot by the insurgents; and twice he was saved on account of the humane character he bore. Indeed at one time a parcel of women surrounded him, and would not let him be put to death. As I said, he took this farm some years since, and lived on it, and gave employment to a great number of people, and was well liked. Some folk, however, owed him a spite for the taking of the land, and *Moll Doyle and her daughters* were hired to pay him a visit. He was sitting comfortably at his good turf fire one evening, resting himself after his day's labour, for he never flinched from work; and no one was with him but an old housekeeper, when four fellows with blackened faces walked in, and presented their guns at him. I don't well know what discourse passed; but we may suppose that he offered to do anything in reason to have his life spared. It is supposed that all were for letting him off but one; but when this fellow levelled his piece at poor Frizelle, he sprung on him, gripped the gun, and a dreadful struggle took place. Frizelle at last wrenched the gun out of the hands of his enemy, who

roared out to the others, and asked them would they see him killed. He then came to close quarters with Frizelle again, and swore that if they did not assist him he would shoot them like dogs as soon as he was at liberty. Mr. Frizelle defended himself as a brave and desperate man would, and, getting an opportunity, he dealt his enemy such a powerful blow that he flung him headlong to the very end of the room. The others, seeing him now at liberty, and the gun in his grasp, felt it was time to interfere; so they rushed in and pinioned him. His strength was so great that he got two of them down, but while struggling for life, his first foe, picking himself up, and taking the gun out of one of his comrades' hands, blew its contents through the entire length of his body, and the struggle was over.

"Of course the news ran like wildfire through the barony, an inquest was held, people were taken up on suspicion; but the murderer was not discovered at the time. However, a part of the lock of a gun was found on the floor where the struggle took place, and one of the policemen put it into his pocket, where it remained for some months.

"Sometime after, a flock of sheep, straying from their owner's lands, committed trespass on a field belonging to Solomon D., a little farmer who lived in Ballyhiland. His wife, spying the mistake, impounded the intruders till their owner would come and pay for the damage. In due time the sheep were liberated, but their owner insisted that one of them was missing. He asked in the most insinuating manner if D.'s wife had lately refreshed herself or family with a mutton-chop; but instead of gratifying his curiosity, she gave him a tart reply, and hinted at an action for defamation of character. The unreasonable man, not yet satisfied, revealed his grievance to the police at Enniscorthy; and Solomon received a visit in consequence, at a time when no visit was looked for. Nothing was discovered; but one of the police, being attracted by the sight of a handsome firelock over the fire-place, drew near and carelessly inspected its works. The gun was a good one, but wanted a bit of the lock; and this the inspector supplied at once by simply putting his hand in his pocket. Solomon

was informed that he must come before the next magistrate; and there the gun itself came under the notice of its former owner, Mr. Gladney, a pensioner, from whom it had been stolen about three years back. I will not tire you with the trial at Wexford, nor the evidence, nor the speeches of counsel. The guilty man was hanged in a paddock adjoining the house in which the murder was committed; and there was a very unpleasant spirit of curiosity and excitement through the barony on the day of the execution. You may be sure that neither Edward, nor Charles, nor myself, nor any of our people, went to witness the dreadful spectacle."

At the end of this narrative our travellers had got through the long rough paved street of Ballybawn, and were now on the bare side of the mountain, the uneven stony way leading straight before them along the side of Cooliagh to the defile between the hills. The young Boro tumbled and flowed down on their right, presenting a series of black pools, shallow falls, and eddies crested with brownish-yellow foam, and large slime-covered stones scattered along its bed. At the other side of this stream a gentle ascent, basking in the clear warm air, and spotted with cows and sheep, led up to Cahir Ruadh's Den; and still the sloping line ran upwards till it ended in the rugged summit of Blackstairs. Groups of boys, and women, and men were to be seen above and below the road, cutting turf, and arranging it for drying on the grass and heath. Here Miss Richards descended from her cage; and Bryan directed Tom to take the horse and car back to where the lane met the Ross road near the Crooked Bridge; to turn to the right to Mr. Somers's house; to fill his creel there with good turf, and wait for his return, which he might look for in about two hours and a half.

So they set off along the mountain road, keeping the soft grassy bank by its side—not arm in arm, for country etiquette does not sanction that practice except in the case of avowed lovers—and the conversation was renewed. She asked him for the full, true, and particular account of the Den and its red master, and he proceeded to detail all that remained of the inglorious memory of Cahir Ruadh.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LEGEND OF CAHIR RUADH.

RED CHARLEY exercised the profession of rapparee and cattle-lifter in the old unsettled times; and as he leant his heavy hand only on the rich *bodaghs* and the *clan Sassanach* who dwelt in the low country, and occasionally dropped a sheep or a quarter of beef at the doors of poor people on the mountain side, he was rather popular than otherwise. A fox seldom pounces on a goose or hen in the neighbourhood of his burrow. So, getting easy in his circumstances, and feeling time hang heavy in his cavern up there on the hill side, he began to dwell on the pleasure of having his solitude cheered by the presence of a female friend. He cast his eyes in an unlucky hour on the daughter of a farmer who lived about that spot beyond the river, where you see the big ash-trees surrounding the house and bawn, and the lane running up at the back of it. The Hyneses live there now, a brave, raw-boned family they are. One of the daughters is as fine and as personable a girl as you would see from this to Castleboro. One day that I called there on some business, the boys were not at hand, and fodder was wanted. My brave Bess did not use much ceremony about it, she took flail in hand, and thrashed away, observing, "What a fine thing it is to have the bone of a man about a house!"

"Mr. Roche, yourself and this young girl would make a fine couple."

"Ah! you are mistaken; it is very seldom you see a man and a woman who resemble each other in size and complexion fall in love with each other. Whatever is the cause, the result is a good one at all events. If like took to like, we would soon have tribes of soft-headed giants, cudgelled and tyrannized over by a race of cantankerous, ill-conditioned dwarfs. But see, we have strayed from our story.

"This farmer's daughter I have spoken of used to smile at Cahir, and exchange a word occasionally with him when he would be going on his expeditions or returning from them. He was very sweet with her, but he found

that though she had no objection to being admired, she did not seem to relish domestic life in a hill cave. So one day, as he was coming from the low lands, mounted on his trusty steed, for which he had fitted up a cave in the neighbourhood of his own retreat, he stopped at the bawn-gate, and asked for a drink. The young damsel brought him a good noggin of milk without any suspicion; but while she was chatting and laughing, she felt the robber's arm round her waist, and herself in an instant flung up before him on the horse. He stopped her mouth as quickly as he could, but not so quickly as to prevent her from giving a scream that would split a rock. To the heels with him up the hill-side as fast as he could lay leg to the ground; but her brothers were out in a second, and between themselves and the neighbours they caught some horses, and pursued the wolf and his prey.

"Now a sweetheart of hers, who was not latterly on very good terms with her on account of her whims, saw the flight and pursuit from his own bawn; and without knowing that himself was so nearly concerned, he caught his favourite horse that was then at hand on the common, and dashed onwards to the head of the procession. You may well imagine his terror when he recognised the kerchief and gown of his own *colleen*. Shouting out and pressing his steed, he dashed at full career at the villain. Except a good stick of tough oak, he was unarmed, but that did not slacken his speed till Cahir, seeing himself beset, pulled out a horse-pistol from the holster, and presenting it at the head of the poor girl, whom he still held thrown across the horse's shoulder, he swore a dreadful oath that he would draw the trigger if any one came a yard nearer. This threat struck such a dread into them, that they did not attempt to approach too close. He kept on, and got to the bottom of the last ascent, when, as God would have it, his horse's fore-foot got entangled in a hole that was concealed by loose grass, and down came man, woman, and steed. He was obliged to loose his hold in the fall, and when he recovered his legs, he felt that he must strive to make his escape alone. The lover and one of her brothers had got between him and his intended

victim, and rushed on him despite the pistol still grasped in his hand. Seeing the extremity in which he stood, he discharged the weapon, but it happily made only a flesh wound in the lover's arm; and then he took to the hill with his utmost speed to reach the cave. He was overtaken by his two foes, and a fierce stroke levelled him within a few perches of his retreat; but such was his strength and activity that he jumped up immediately, and, armed with his long pistol, kept his assailants employed for some time. All were now in full charge running towards the group of combatants, and a blow of the sweetheart's sapling on Cahir's elbow sent the weapon some yards away on the heath.

Finding that further resistance was out of the question, he now flew towards the mouth of the cave, which opened to the air like a mine-hole. There were nicely-contrived holes and holdfasts in the side, by which he could get down at his ease when he was not in a hurry; but now the lover kept at his heels like a bloodhound, and just as they approached the yawning gulf, he struck furiously at Cahir, hand and foot, and down went the ruffian head foremost. No one seemed anxious to follow him, as they were not acquainted with the trick of the steps; and there was great joy among the crowd, you may depend. The damsel cried with both joy and sorrow when her brave sweetheart came down the hill; she tied up his arm with her handkerchief, and vowed that she never would vex him again while she lived; yet all that, I dare say, was not able to prevent a little tiff or two both before and after the knot was tied. People were afraid for a long time to try the adventure of the cavern, as they say in story-books. I never heard any account I could depend on, of any one having explored it since that time, but about twenty years ago it was stopped up, as many sheep and cows were lost by going too near the edge.

"Now here we are on the bounds of Carlow and Wexford. Take a look at your own country, for you will not see it again for some days. What a fine wide view we have here, from the seat of the O'Kavanagh far away to

the right till the eye rests on the hill of Brandon. There it is, shooting up like a sugar-loaf, to the left of the old town of *Graigue-na-Manha.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AN ACCIDENT AND AN ALE-HOUSE CONFERENCE.

Now, patient reader, suppose our travellers to have descended the defile along a very stony and uneven road; huge rocks and great earthen scaurs on their right hand and morasses on their left beyond a long spur of the hill; the cabins on either side resembling dogs sitting on their haunches, and the few natives in sight betraying a want of cultivation in their dress and demeanour. At last they met the road travelled about a twelvemonth before by the affianced lovers, and here they parted, the lady taking the level road towards Graigue, and Bryan retracing his steps up the hill side.

When Bryan found himself alone, and thought of his own affairs, he began to feel uncomfortable. The day was pretty well advanced; he had to get back from Ballygibbon before Tom would set out for home; and he did not rightly know how to account for the ramble, nor what to say to Tom on the subject; for he did not feel himself yet at liberty to speak about Edward's affairs. Arriving near the verge of the hill, he sat on a stone for a while to rest and take council with himself; and a confused series of images began to scamper through the chambers of his brain, coursing each other, intermingling and separating, till he became aware of a tendency to sleep. This frightening him a bit, he rose in a hurry, and resumed his upward journey. He made more haste than good speed, however, for, walking along the edge of a bank, his foot slipped into a concealed cavity; he was thrown down, and his instep sprained. Here he was disabled on a lonely hillside, suffering pain, and no chance of aid perhaps for hours, his absence not accounted for at home, his family dismayed; Sleeveen again at his good offices; a likely

report of his going off in company with a strange young woman, and the consequent distress of Theresa. All these ideas filled his mind with most disagreeable confusion; and so bitterly did he dwell on the fright of his own family, and the grief or resentment of Theresa, that tears which no bodily pain could wring from him burst forth, and the strong and fearless young man wept for some time like a child.

This indulgence brought a little temporary relief; but he presently felt a pang of remorse for forgetting the immediate and watchful care of Providence, which is as near and effective in the desert as in crowded cities. He invoked God's pardon and protection, and resigned himself to the divine will to the utmost of his power, though his foot continued in a very painful state, and a couple of hours the longest and the most dreary he ever experienced, slowly passed over his head.

At last he got sight of an uncouth-looking lad, who was probably hunting for some strayed sheep. He called as loudly as he could raise his voice, and on the boy's approach, begged him to run over the brow, and go on till he would meet some turf-cutters, and beg them to come for God's sake and help him out of his helpless position. "Let them know," said he, "that I am from the neighbourhood of Castleboro, and tell them to bring a car if possible, to take me down to some friends in Ballygibbon or Tomenine."

The lad speedily disappeared; and in little more than half an hour was seen recrossing the brow of the hill, accompanied by two men. Great was Bryan's comfort in recognising in these two Doctor Kelly of Rathnure, and one of the Somerses, to whose place Tom had returned for the turf. After some questions and explanations the doctor examined the foot, and comforted the patient with the assurance that it was only an ordinary sprain, and that all would be right in a day or two. The two men then raised him and supported him between them, till they got over the brow of the hill, and on to the eastern slope, whence there is so fine a prospect over the whole barony, and as far as Enniscorthy. There they met a common car,

which had been put in request by the doctor when he first heard the news, and which had since been filled with soft heath and dry grass. Our friend was helped into it, and they set out for the lowlands, Mr. Somers insisting that he should not pass Ballygibbon that night, and the doctor accompanying him thither. When they arrived they found that Tom had set out for home some time before. The doctor did what was needful in the way of his art, and Bryan was left resting on a bed—sofas not having yet appeared in this hilly district—and a labourer was dispatched to Mr. Roche's with the intelligence of the accident, and a request that a car might be brought next day to the chapel of Rathnure, whither he would be conveyed in one of Mr. Somers's. Dr. Kelly did not expect to be home till late in the evening, or he would have taken this duty on himself.

Trifling negligences and trifling attentions are often attended with very important results. The messenger, on crossing the little stream which lies between the bawn and the road, had two ways before him. One led by the river down to Tomenine bridge, and so on by Father Murphy's, and the wood below it which extends to Castleboro bridge. The other was longer, making a considerable bend to the left; but it passed near the chapel, and beside this chapel flourished Mr. Hand; and opposite lived Mr. Forrestal, and in both houses there was a good store of whiskey, beer, and wine. Perhaps a more unfit messenger could not have been selected. The following quatrain on his peculiarities is still remembered, and for anything I know to the contrary it might have been composed by Paddy Quigly of Tomenine.

"The youth whose praise I mean to sing is Billy Drooghan hight;
And arguing on religious points is Billy's great delight;
And when he finds his brain well heated at this exercise,
To cool it down with whiskey punch he deems it wondrous wise."

So Billy, in an unlucky hour, and under the influence of the planet Bacchus, if such unsober wandering star exists, took the Rathnure road; and we will follow his steps, and exhort him to discharge his task, and without

favour or prejudice deliver his message like a man of sense.

Alas, alas! Billy got on well enough till he came to that bend in the road about twenty perches from Mrs. Hand's, at which point if he could gather courage to take the lane on his right hand, his mission would be crowned with success. "Now, Billy," said he to himself at that most fatal spot, beginning like a fool to tamper with the fiend, "what harm would a tumbler of punch or a pint of mulled beer, with the hot creamy froth on the top of it, do you after your hard week's work? Harm! not a bit, but a great deal of good. Ah! but wouldn't it be better to keep the fi'penny for Martin Drooghan and the old mother? Faith it would; but still all work and no play makes Jack, that is Bill, a dull boy. Yes, but maybe if I turn into Mrs. Hand's, I may make a baste of myself, and the family down there will be in a fright about their big boy: I ought to strain a point for him; we are about the tallest, us two, in the barony. Hurroo for Bryan! good-bye, Mrs. Hand!" and stoutly he wended on for about seven perches in the direction of the village. "That's it, Billy," said he. "Often I hear them say I haven't the *sthrenth* of a thraneen when beer and whisky is in the way: I'll show them they're liars. But now what's the use of a man making a galley-slave of himself from Monday morning to Saturday night, and neither *sooth* nor sport for it? You deserve to be rewarded for your firmness, Billy, and you shall. One tumbler or a pint I'll take, and if the priest was on the spot, and offered me another, it shan't touch my lips. And it's only right to encourage our neighbours. How could Mrs. Hand keep house if no one called to taste her liquor? Or how could farmers get such good prices for barley and oats, if beer was not brewed nor whisky distilled. And if the farmers did not get the good prices, do you think they could pay us, poor slaves, for our labour? Isn't it then a duty to drink—in moderation, mind you?" He entered the ale-house with *moderation* on his lips, and half way down to his heart; but our old acquaintance Tom Quigly was sitting at the table. Prudence, who had timidly hovered over Billy's head thus far,

spread wings at sight of Tom's black curly head, and left her unlucky protegé to his own discretion.

Tom and Billy had had a boxing match or two ere now, the result of vows of friendship made over the tumbler or quart; but as neither had room in his bodily structure for cherished spite, and as each of them was gifted with a large amount of animal courage, they were not a bit the worse friends. In the same company were also Jemmy F., of the "Leinster Legends," and *Dhonogha-n-Gurrawn.*

Denis was a solemn-looking man, the least bit in the world of a voteen. He lived at the corner where the lane rising from the ford under Rathnure village meets the Gurrawn road, and where Joanna had seen Bryan and Biddy Foley conversing. From this corner you look down one road towards Castleboro bridge, and along the other bend to a little paradise where a branch of the Whitney family and another of the Hornecks are separated by a lane with sweetbriar hedges on either hand. Ah, what a colony of ducks, pigs, geese, turkeys, and hens flourished in Mr. Horneck's large bawn, and how sweet were the apples that grew in the old orchard: I am well qualified to speak of their excellence. A stream coming down from Grange, and flowing under the orchard just named, held on its course till it joined the Boro just above Mr. Graham's mill.

Donogha was a sworn vassal to old Mrs. Whitney. Indeed these old Palatine families could command the services of their Catholic dependants to a great extent; they were so considerate, so good-natured, and so little of an exacting disposition. He was holding forth on a very trying grievance just as Billy entered, and when the tumbler was ready, and Billy was preparing to become "glorious," he continued, "Yes, indeed, Mr. F.; the *masthress*, as humble as I look, never does anything without consulting me. I'm sure I wonder what she sees in me to make her so fond of getting my opinion. But I pay for it sometimes with all the tricks that limb of the divil that's living in my bawn is always playing off on me—sure you know him well enough, Billy *Clear* (Clare), and be hanged to him! I was warming my poor legs and feet the coldest night of

last winter at my own fireside; my brogues were off, and I was holding up my legs *wady-buckedy*, to get the benefit of the *hate*, when what did I hear outside of the door but the very voice of the mistress calling out, 'Are you within, Denis?' it was her own grand and genteel way of speaking. '*Yas, Ma'am*,' says I; 'I will be with you in a minute. Biddy, you bosthoon, bring me my brogues till I go speak to the mistress.' Well, the brogues got a good deal of wetting in the day, and Biddy was going to *graze* 'em just at the moment; but they were so crusty after the drying she gave 'em, that I was very hard set to get 'em on; and I so confused with the mistress crying out, 'Denis, if it is not convenient, don't stir from the fire. What I have to say is of no consequence: I can get Jack Tobin to do it for me as I go home; good night, Denis.' 'Oh, stay, ma'am,' says I; 'I'm just ready. Bother your ungainly hands, Biddy: what need you scorch the brogues in this manner? I'm comin', ma'am, I'm comin'.' Well, when I did come out in the piercing night air, in my poor bald head, (all out of respect) what should I see but masther Billy sitting on the hopping-block, and his sides splitting with the laughing? 'Is that you, my lad?' says I. 'It is, Mr. Dhonogha,' says he: 'didn't I do it nate?' 'You did, you scum o' the airth,' says I, 'and a shin of yours you won't warm at my hearth this winter.'

Jemmy F.—I think, Denis, that you suppose Mrs. Whitney to be made of different flesh and blood from ourselves. Do you ever go to church to gratify her?

Tom.—Mr. F., use civil language if you please. Mrs. Whitney knows that if she took Denis to read his recantation, he'd be only handling his beads unknownst, and thumping his *craw* when he'd think the minister nor the congregation wasn't looking at him. She knows his weak points well enough without striving to make him a convartin'—no, a convartible—old hypocrite. I say, Billy, my old enemy, what would the world be without religion? I don't mean what my friend Jemmy thinks is religion, when he'd roast a *Prodestin* at a slow fire, and eat him then with a grain of salt; divil do him good with his male! nor the religion of another worthy acquaintance

that, when he ought to be mellow and jolly in his liquor, drinks confusion to all papists; and wishes the head of their church in a warm corner below, and to have *Old Booty* pelting priests at him. No, no; Billy, that's not the real stuff. If you believe yourself right, and your neighbour wrong, pray for him; do what you can in a friendly easy way to bring him to the truth—not to swell your faction nor party, but to save the man's soul.'

Mr. Hand, the landlord, now joined the company. His wife was a Catholic, and he was a sincere Protestant, without a drop of religious bitterness in his composition.

Billy.—You're welcome, our worthy landlord, I'm glad you're come in to regulate your neighbour, Jemmy F. If you let him open his mouth, you'll have to hear all about Luther, and Calvin, and Harry the Eighth, and his half dozen wives before he closes it. I drink to the softening of the wrinkles of your heart, Mr. F. But as I was going to tell you, I am, that is, I was going down to Mr. Roche's of ——— to let them know that their son Bryan is confined with his instep above at Mr. Somers's of Ballygibbon, and that they needn't be in trouble about him, and that they are to meet him here abroad at the chapel to-morrow. Now if I stay to enjoy Mr. Hand's company, or to get in any more liquor, maybe I'll be overtaken, and not be able to go at all.

Tom Quigly.—Keep up a good heart, Billy; sure I'll be going home by their door, and dickens a hank farther than this you need come. I'll deliver your commands like Hector of Troy, and save you three good miles of a tramp back and *forad.* Mr. Hand, our worthy host, may you never be without the good drop, nor the customer to drink it for you!

As Billy had a slight suspicion that he would be depending on a rotten stick if he accepted Tom's services, he resolved to stay but one half hour more, and then to see his friend on the road. His intentions were sincere, but the temptation both on its sensual and social side was too strong for him. As his poet acknowledged, he was great in "arguing Scripture," but on the present occasion the impulse was absent. Mr. Hand never indulged in con-

troversy, and Jemmy entertained such *personal* bitterness against Protestants, that neither Tom nor Billy would countenance him. Tom exhorted the landlord not to judge of all his Catholic neighbours by this worthy, and then continued, "Mr. Hand, does myself or Billy here pass your house to leave our money with Mr. Forrestal, because he blesses himself? Not we indeed! nor would he give us a better drop than he would to any yeoman that would look in on him."

Mr. Hand.—Thank you kindly, Tom. Now there is one thing among us which I dislike very much; and that is—stories, written I am sure by ignorant, self-proud, and ill-natured old women; and in these stories there is no end to the lies that are told of Catholics and their practices. You would think by reading them that Romanists (or Papists as they always call you) have more faith in the power of the Virgin Mary, and the saints, and in dead men's bones, and images made by their own hands, than in the Son of God himself. Another falsehood they are always telling is about priests giving leave to commit sin, or selling pardons for past or future sins, or absolving penitents whether they judge them to have true sorrow for their sins or not. This I know well enough to be all rank lying, from reading your penny catechism, and from conversing with yourselves.

Billy.—Ah, Mr. Hand! I could tell you something that I'm sure will please your good desire for fair play; but (said he, grinding his teeth) if I had in my power one of these old dowagers, with vinegar instead of blood in her veins, I'd give her a dinner of salt herrings on Friday, and shut her up till twelve o'clock next day; and I'd lay a tumbler of nice cold punch or a jug of mild ale in a locked cupboard, with an iron grating in front; and let her look at it till her tongue and mouth would be as dry as a lime-burner's hat. I wouldn't starve her, to be sure I wouldn't; but I'd lay a fresh supply of red herrings or salt beef before her, and let her eat or not, as she liked; but that is not my story. God help me! I'm a great curser and swearer, as you all know; and often and often I went to confession to poor Father Murphy. May God send him back to us!

Well to be sure, I was obliged to tell about my cursing and swearing; and he put me off from week to week, till I'd lay aside the habit. Ah! sorrow a bit better was I getting, and I couldn't even tell the number of curses I gave every hour; and I was fairly bothered (your candles are burning very unsteady, Mr. Hand), for I couldn't stop the swearing, and the priest wouldn't give me absolution. Tom, I think your head, and body, and the punch-jug is running to one side of the room.

Tom.—I think, Billy, it's your own story you're telling; but I'm sure the floor of the parlour is rising up at that side.

Billy.—Well, at last I was fairly kilt with grief and vexation; and I was thinking what to do; and I standing just outside the gate that opens on the gravelly bank of the river, as you come down the lane from the priest's house. Tom, if you neglect to have the message to-night at the Roches', I'll hang for you some day, so I will: here's towards your good health. I think you are dozing this minute.

Tom.—Me going asleep! Don't be making a *Moll Mackay* of yourself. I'll do my duty, if I had to go to the top of Slievekeiltra for it. Finish your story like a Christian. Your eyes are getting a very pewtery look about them.

Billy.—Well, as I was saying, he was putting me off and off.

Tom.—You told us that an hour ago.

Billy.—Well, where was I?

Tom.—At the gate near the swimming pool.

Billy.—Well, there I was, and the river mountain high after the great rain—it was the colour of Mr. Hand's cassimeres, if he threw them among some wet yellow clay—when who should I see coming down the bushy hill from *Colliach* Delany's, but Father James himself? He was returning from a sick visit. So, when he got to the edge he beckoned to me—not from where the stepping stones are—a camel would be *swep* away there: it was from the end of the wide lane higher up—it's a wonder I'm so dry

and I telling such a wet story. Let the tumbler be renewed, my jovial landlord.

Mr. Hand.—No more, Billy, till Father Murphy is safe across.

Billy.—Oh, hang the expense; let us have the liquor.

Mr. Hand.—No, I tell you; go on. Who knows what we'll do by-and-by!

Billy.—Well, he calls to me, and says: 'Billy, my brave boy, you have to come and carry me over.' 'With all the veins, sir,' says myself. So I got across, and it was no trifle, and hoisted the priest on my back, and tried my fortune again. We got on very well for about four or five yards, and then I began to get unsteady on my underworks. 'It's not thinking you are of giving way, Billy,' says he. 'Faith, sir,' says I, 'we are at a pinch, dickens a doubt of it.' 'Don't swear, you unfortunate boy,' says he, 'and you in the height of danger.' 'It's on my last legs I'm afraid I am, your reverence,' says I; 'so, father dear, give me absolution for all them oaths and sprees I confessed.' 'Why, you anointed rogue,' says he, 'this is neither time nor place for such a thing. Push on in the name of Goodness. If you stand *waumussing* here, you will get drunk looking at the flood, and both of us will be lost.' 'You just said the word, Father James,' says I; 'wont you forgive me now for all the drunkenness I ever committed?' and I gave a reel at the same time. 'You unsanctified creature, you want to frighten me, but you shan't. If I went through the form itself, you wouldn't be a bit the better of it while your mind is in the state it is now.' 'Oh that's all *collywest*,' says I, giving another heave; 'what is the good of being an ordained clergyman, if you have not the power of doing something for an unlucky disciple like myself when he's at the last pinch?' 'I'll hold no more discourse with you,' said he then. 'The highest bishop in the world—the very Pope himself, has no authority to give absolution, unless the penitent feels a sincere sorrow for his offences, and firmly resolves with God's grace not to commit them any more. This is my last word: God's will be done.' 'Well, Father James, *achudh*,' says I, 'at any rate offer up a prayer

for me. I am sorry from the bottom of my heart for this dirty trick. Now in the name of all that's good!'——But as if I was to get a smart for my wickedness, when I strove to get on, I had like to be swept fairly off my feet, for while I was *making believe*, I got into a deeper part than where I crossed. Well, I said a short prayer, and set my teeth, and planted my feet as firm as I could, but I began to feel them losing their hold of the bottom. Father James saw the danger, and cried out, 'Billy, I will not put you to the risk of your life; let me slip down, and we'll grip one another, and take our chance in the name of God.' 'No, sir,' says I, 'there would be more danger in doing that than we're in now. God spared me so long in my swearing and drinking, sure he will look on me when I'm striving to do some good, and the life of a priest in the scales.' The thought made my sinews like whipcord, and the very load I was carrying *studied* me. In one or two more steps I felt the terrible rush of the waters weakening a bit, and my eyesight not dancing no much. Ugh! but it was dreadful, the boiling, muddy sweep of the waters, with the froth and the turf-*mull* and bog stumps going by just on a level with my breast, and I not knowing but that Father James and myself would be driving along with it the next minute. But it was the will of God that we should escape; and we soon had dry clothes on us, and I got a good hot tumbler of punch sitting in my corner inside the spy-hole. Well, I was afraid of a scolding or a tap of the whip; but poor Father James, that would sometimes be troubled if the cat only looked crooked, was as calm as a saint in real trials, and never opened his mouth on the subject again. Well, thank Goodness, I think there is a kind of reformation since that day. If I drink, it is only when the week's labour is over, or when I have good fellows about me. Towards your good health, neighbours; *ovoch*, there is nothing in the tumbler. Tom, I think you're getting drowsy; indeed I feel the sand in my own eyes. Come, Mr. Hand, here's a half-crown, pay yourself, and thankee for your good company and improving conversation."

Mr. Hand.—I have no change, Billy, and I have not time to reckon the account. Put your half-crown in your

pocket; we will talk of it some other time. If you think the way to Ballygibbon too long, we have a spare bed.

Billy.—Thank you, Mr. Hand; but I'll move; I must see Tom on the road to deliver my message. Oh, whisky! whisky! Steady, Tom, my boy; here we go. Good night! I'll pray for your conversion, Mr. Hand, if I think of it when I am next on my knees.

So the pair set out, and, at the turn already mentioned, separated, with many exhortations on Billy's part, and many promises on Tom's to do a friend's duty. Billy reeled along the Ross road till he passed Tomenine bridge, and then he turned towards the mountain through the fields. Beyond the farm-house of my old schoolfellows the Henricks, he passed along the edge of a narrow valley, whose furzy sides were almost as upright as a wall, and its bed one sheet of velvetty green turf. Billy took care not to approach too near its edge; and if he had an artistic soul he would have been arrested by the rays of the low moon slanting across the gloom of the defile, and lighting the upper part of the opposite dark green side, and the brighter verdure of the bottom, where the two walls separated from each other towards its outlet. The upper part of the dell lay in obscurity, but the brighter green of the low meadow was even there distinguished from the dark prickly furze of the sides. Billy was now nigh hand to his bed in Somers's barn, into which he got without entering into the particulars of how he had sped, further than giving the general assurance that all was right.

Poor Tom had not so strong a head as his friend, though long acquaintance with the *fire-water* might have led to such an expectation. He explored the lonesome lane already described, leading down eastwards to the upper little street of Rathnure; one side of the scattered hamlet being in shade, and the white walls of the cottages on the opposite side, and part of the wide road, reposing in the cold moonlight. The lane turns here directly south, and at some distance once again eastwards through the crowded lower village, sheltered by trees, till it meets the shallow stony ford so often mentioned.

Tom's intentions were not seconded by his powers;

farther than this lower village he could not proceed, and the ford remained uncrossed. My old friend Mogue Heffernan was at his bawn-gate, and thinking of retiring to bed, when he was aware of Mr. Quigly's useless efforts at onward progression in a right line. Using a little gentle force, he brought him into the house and put him to bed, the patient's organs of speech forming the sounds, "Bryan—sprained foot—Billy Drooghan—Dhonogha and his brogues—Billy Clear, etc." The family, however, could not learn from these disjointed subjects the thing needful to be done; and the messengers who had gone upwards at sunset stayed with their mountain friends on finding that Billy had been sent downwards, and so sorrow was a guest with the O'Briens and Roches till the night had passed away.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

DOMESTIC ANTAGONISM.

When our bibulous friend awoke with aching brows next morning, and recalled to mind his unperformed duty, he was in a pitiable state. He threw on his clothes, took his departure with little ceremony, and went as fast as his limbs could carry him across the ford, and by a pathway up to the fine high road which leads from Donogha's-house down to Castleboro bridge. Tom, passing down this road, had the rays of the morning sun coming down blazing on his aching head; and he would have gladly welcomed a cooling drink, but his mind was in torment for his neglect, and he pushed on. He delivered his message to Joanna, whom he met outside, and afterwards refreshed himself with a jug of buttermilk, which the gladdened Theresa was only too happy to run for to the dairy.

It will be recollected that the family, while at breakfast, were startled by a scream from Joanna; it was, however, only a signal of joy on her side. In she flew, laughing and shouting, hugged her mistresses old and young, danced about the floor, and told her news as connectedly as she could afford; but, except for the pantomimic commentary, her audience would not have been well advised as to

whether they should mourn or rejoice. "Oh, ma'am! good news; thank God! poor Bryan was only kept from coming home by a *sthrained* instep; and Tom that's so sorry that he was overtaken by the liquor; and Billy the thief, that forgot all when he got his nose inside the punch jug at Mrs. Hand's; and it was just beyond the gap of Cooliagh it happened, by reason of his foot getting into a hole; and if half a dozen girls ran away with him over the mountains, and he loses his sweetheart, I'll marry him myself, so I will. I'll go wild with joy; but here's Tom, that will insense yez of the perorational circumstances."

Tom being questioned, could only give a meagre outline of what had occurred; but even that was calculated to relieve their minds; and Joanna was off down the lane to dispatch Sweetman with a car and its furniture of pallet, straw, and quilt, to the chapel of Rathnure. Tom Quigly, after many expressions of contrition for his short comings, went home to prepare for a decent appearance at Courtnacuddy chapel; and, after the joyful turmoil had quieted a little, some who had scarcely tasted food since yesterday morning now sat down to partake of breakfast with newly recovered appetites.

The surly master of the house, now more surly than ever, seeming suddenly to recollect something forgotten, cried out, "By-the-by, I am not sorry for this confusion being at an end; everything is forgotten or done at the wrong time. While you two were inside there yesterday after dinner, a strange lad handed me this letter from Ned. I did not wish to break in on your trouble at the time, but put it in my pocket, intending to hand it to you after a little; and there it has lain quite forgotten ever since." Theresa took the crumpled paper from his hand, glanced at the wafer fastening, guessed that it had not been tampered with (Mr. O'Brien did not think it at all necessary to open the missive), and as breakfast was just over retired with her mother and read the intelligence, which had the usual fate of matters connected with our poor Edward; and this was that, when done, it might as well have remained undone. They now found what, only for hard fate and Edward's constitutional failings, they would have been

aware of from the beginning—that Bryan's conduct was irreproachable; and that probably at or about the present hour Edward was submitting his neck to the marriage yoke. Their feelings were a strange mixture of gladness and sorrow; for though they felt deep relief from the consciousness of Bryan's innocence, they were troubled for Edward, and were anxious about Bryan's hurt into the bargain.

One of the young men of the Somers family, not being so much wedded to agricultural pursuits as his brothers, had a tasty little shop fitted up in a corner of the bawn, and diverted his unoccupied hours with selling all sorts of ordinary commodities to the inhabitants of his mountain neighbourhood. Besides these material necessaries, which embraced every thing from a brass pen to a barrelled herring, he furnished the mind with food, healthy and unhealthy, in the form of primers, *Universals*, and various chap books or *Burtons*, among which figured *The Royal Fairy Tales*, *The Tales of the Fairies*, *Don Montelion, or the Knight of the Oracle*, *Laugh and be Fat*, *The Battle of Aughrim*, *Don Quixote*, and *The Arabian Nights*. These works were wretched as to type and paper, bound in the vilest sheep, and sold at 6½d. each; yet, despite these disadvantages, I set high value on a still carefully preserved copy of *Don Belianis*.

Thus far had Edward explored when his borrowed resources were at an end, and until he became master of one copy of each of the above popular works, and it was in that house he suffered the keenest disappointment in all his boyish experience. He went one day to purchase some article, and the shopkeeper being temporarily absent, he was invited to sit by the kitchen fire; and, oh bliss! what did he find on the dresser but a volume of *The Mysteries of Udolpho!* Talk of Dick Shones Phoor with a *skiagh* of new potatoes before him, of Tom Quigly embracing a foaming quart of mulled beer, of a Kilkenny antiquary gazing on the miraculously preserved Ogham stones of Dunbel. These would not come up to the mark, nor within perches of it. He plunged headlong into the damp, dark, subterranean passages of the Appennine castle.

Panting, he followed the trembling steps of *Emily*, as she was led by the terrible *Barnardino*, in his russet boots, flapped hat, belt, and torch that would not burn clear for any persuasion. Ah! what gloomy effects of light and shade were there; and what transports of delicious terror he enjoyed; and how unwelcome was the return of the shopkeeper; and how dreary his homeward walk; and how imperfect his existence for some succeeding weeks through thirst for the sequel of the enchanting story! Alas for the change of youthful tastes and the disenchantment of youthful visions! The same hero informed us, a score of years later, that having met with a complete set of the identical romance some days before, he had not been tempted even to open it.

Bryan spent a restless night, and, contrary to his entertainer's wishes, he insisted on attending Mass next day. He was met there by his father and Tom with a comfortably-fitted car; and a dozen different accounts of the accident were circulated after Mass through Grange, Rathduff, Milltown, Killeen, Rathnure, Coolbawn, Monanamuch, and Monamolin.

About two o'clock Bryan's heart was beating as his vehicle approached the back of O'Brien's farm-house. As the car went creaking by, it was invested by the whole family, the head excepted; and surely he must have been very exacting if he was not satisfied with the unconcealed joy which he could easily read in every feature of Theresa's truthful countenance. After earnest inquiries about the present condition of the hurt, the car was allowed to proceed, the young lady and her handmaid accompanying it for some distance. As the conversation of either couple (Tom being at the horse's head and Joanna not far off) did not reach the other, except very imperfectly, it would not be an easy matter to give the double conference in substance or detail; nor do we think the speakers would thank us for our officiousness. They parted with the understanding that the Clan Roche would be at home for the reception of their neighbours in the evening; and just then was heard the sound which a young woman's palm makes on its swift application to the cheek of a healthy

labourer, such as Tom Sweetman was. We are not thoroughly certain why this slap was inflicted; but as to the other couple, we are free to confess that beyond an occasional kind pressure of hands, Bryan had hitherto little to boast of in the way of caress from the lady of his heart.

We will now accompany the O'Brien family to their neighbours' hospitable parlour in the evening. Bryan, resting on the turned up settle-bed, is giving his fifth repetition of yesterday's adventure; and Mrs. Roche, apropos to what he has suffered and is suffering, appeals to O'Brien for his consent to the union of their children. He had come down with an ill grace; but he preferred to have the unpleasant business at an end, and had therefore accepted the invitation. On the appeal being made, he delivered himself of a short oration, the abstract of which is subjoined. It consisted of six parts. The *first* denounced Bryan's want of land, sufficient in O'Brien's mind to the wants of the household of a snug farmer; the *second* exhibited Mac Cracken's suit, and the fitness of things in his instance, both as regarded land and influence; and this naturally led to the *third*, which exhibited his own consent given to the said Mac Cracken's suit long sincé. The *fourth* hinted at the desirability of a man having some influence in the disposing of his children in matrimony, and O'Brien's natural chagrin at the wilfulness of his own son and daughter. The *fifth* expressed his determination not to act the part of a *Molly Vawn* in the government of his family; and the *sixth* announced that if they were bent on taking his daughter from him, not a penny nor penny's worth would she bring to them except her clothes, and the trifle of pocket money she used to get for her fowl.

Mr. Roche and his partner received this declaration with some concern; Bryan with none; but Theresa and her mother seemed most affected. Mrs. Roche was the first to speak: "Indeed, neighbour, I did not expect much better at your hands. But though I would not be sorry that the young people should have it in their power to turn your useless mouldy guineas to some good, it will not make any difference in our welcome for our dear girl. No.

If Bryan had an estate, and she was without a farthing, it was all the same. She is as dear to us as if she was our own child. If they have not much to start with, they have God's grace, youth, love, health, and strength; they have everything we can give them, and our blessing, and God's blessing to bring luck to them."

All the answer poor Theresa could make was to throw her arms round the neck of the warm-hearted woman, and to burst into tears; but Mrs. O'Brien and the invalid put in their oars, and used all their eloquence to soften the obdurate father.

Mr. O'Brien.—All fine talk! It will do well enough while the courting and the honeymoon lasts; but I'd be glad to hear your opinion, if the bride falls sick, or anything prevents her from turning her hands to the house concerns. Indeed I don't think, Mr. Roche, that you can afford to support many useless people no more than myself; and I consider it a mean thing for her to do, if she thinks proper to throw herself for a burthen on you. Now I have said my say, and I'll neither scold nor abuse; let every one do as they please; I don't care a button what any one thinks or says about it. Mac Cracken was the man I had my mind made up about; he had my good will, and was promised a hundred and fifty pounds. I wish to leave my children comfortable, but if they don't choose to be *said* and *led* by me, let them take their own road like *Art Byrne's* dog. I'll be neither art nor part in their doings.

Mrs. Roche.—Troth, and it's grateful they ought to be to you. Your whole life has been taken up in planning and scheming to add one guinea to another: you are one who if he was rolling in riches would be still afraid of dying a beggar; and if you could take your rubbish with you to the other world, chick nor child would'nt be the better for you. You never took any pleasure in your children's prattle or little amusements; but would sit whole evenings with your eyes and mouth puckered up, just as if you were looking inside of yourself, and planning and plotting to get more notice from Mr. Carew, or more gold into the old stocking. *Signs on it,* they saw you took no pleasure in

anything they cared about; and only for their own sense, and natural goodness, and the love they have for their mother, it's little they'd care for their home; and now, if you outlive your wife—God between her and harm!—*who* will you have to care a straw about your comfort? Don't heed what he says, Theresa, dear. Bryan will soon be well of his foot; give only your consent, and the marriage will take place: and you'll come among people from whom you will never get the unkind word or the cold shoulder; and we'll be at the end of these mistakes and frights; and get into our old easy-going ways again. If your father relents between this and then, well and good; if he doesn't, we can't find grief for every misfortune.

"Dear Theresa," said Bryan, who had watched the flush on her face at the mention of the speedy marriage, and the paleness that immediately followed it; "be *said* by my mother. While we remain asunder after this, we will be afraid of mistakes and accidents, and there is no way of getting *shut* of them but the one."

He stretched over his hand towards Theresa during his short speech; and she, despising the dictates of false modesty, took it and gently returned the loving pressure; and as her words tended to disappoint his wishes, she was in no hurry to let it go when returning her answer. It was to the effect that she could not think of entering on the married state against her father's will, without some further efforts to obtain it, and for this some delay would be probably required. "We are young enough to wait for several years yet. I would be very unwilling to enter your house, dear mother," said she, turning to Mrs. Roche, "so bare as I would be if the marriage took place now. Don't go scold me. I know some part of it is pride; but think how much pleasanter it would be if my father gives way. If he does not within a couple of years, I will not oppose your wishes nor my own any longer."

They all knew the firmness of Theresa's character, and after a few other attempts to shake her resolve, the discussion ceased, and her father took his leave, rather in a good humour than otherwise; for he was sure of the delay, and

he expected that some lucky chance might bring about the fulfilment of his own plans in the interim.

The discourse then fell on poor Edward, and the unusual style of his marriage. It was determined on, that his bride and himself should be invited to Castleboro immediately after their return, for whatever short period he could be spared from his duties; and that if the old gentleman was not agreeable, they should take up their quarters at the Roches. Bryan, who knew more (by hearsay) of the bride than the rest, praised her soft innocent countenance, gentle manners, &c.; and did his best to create a welcome feeling for her among her new relatives. He entered again on some particulars of the previous day, and commended the good looks and good sense of his companion, and Theresa did not seem much mortified by his encomiums.

After an evening spent in loving and interesting conversation, Mr. Roche summoned all to suspend their talk, while he read Gother's "Remarks on the Epistle and Gospel of the day," and afterwards went through the usual family devotions, including litanies and parts of the Rosary, whilst he did not forget to return particular thanks for the mercies lately vouchsafed to the united families.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

EDWARD'S EFFORTS TO GET A WIFE.

As Bryan lay awake about eleven o'clock the same night, with a tide of pleasant and unpleasant thoughts flowing through his mind, he became aware of a low tapping at the kitchen door. The maid servant, who was enjoying the reward of labour and an easy conscience in the settle-bed, was prevented by a piece of melody which she was unconsciously performing on her nose, from hearing the first few taps; but the repetition, aided by Bryan's exhortations, roused her at last. He heard her holding a conference with the late comer through the door, which she unbolted as soon as she distinguished the voice. A wearied foot was next heard on the stairs; and Bryan soon found his hand grasped by Edward, whom a few moments

since he would have thought beyond the Barrow, if his mind had wandered in that direction.

"Gracious! what brings you here at this hour? and are you married? and how is your bride? and where is she? or is she sick?" Edward, sinking into a chair with a sigh of weariness, and taking a mug of buttermilk which the girl had just brought up, on a hint given as he came through the kitchen, he drained it to the bottom; and said his say as soon as he was able. "I am here because I can't help it; I am no more married than yourself, though I hope to have a different story to tell the day after to-morrow; Eliza is well, I hope; but I am so jaded body and mind, and my limbs are so stiff, and the very marrow in my bones is so dry, that I have not power to tell you anything more. Make room for me by the natch, and I will tumble in the moment I can finish a few prayers. Oh, goodness! goodness! what a long day since I woke this morning! I feel a year older. May the Lord vouchsafe us his guidance and protection!"

The few prayers were said, the clothes huddled off, and the wearied man fell at once into a slumber. It was not deep indeed, nor refreshing; for the peculiar sensation arising from the want of oil round the joints, would cause his limbs to be tossed at times, as if seeking relief from the arid disagreeable feeling of the marrow being a mere mass of dry pith. Bryan's rest was terribly interfered with by the strangeness of the adventure, and the restless movements of his bedfellow. Towards morning both awoke about the same time, and Edward had a scared and troubled look for a few seconds. On being asked how he felt himself, he acknowledged considerable stiffness in his limbs, and after a few preliminaries commenced the history of the previous day.

"I intended to set out in the afternoon of Saturday, and to sup at my friend's house near the Barrow; and so I put every thing in the best order I could; and nothing remained to be done but to call on John Dowdall, the son of one of my chief patrons, to get money from him. He had borrowed every penny I had in my possession,—about ten pounds,—a week before; and I was to receive it back at a

moment's notice. I called down on Friday evening, but found my friend absent at a fair on the other side of the *water* (the Slaney); but he was expected home next day at noon. I thought no more of the matter, but called again at the time mentioned, and was somewhat annoyed at not finding him returned. The family supposed that his cousins, at whose place he had slept on Friday evening, had laid violent hands on him, and kept him prisoner—perhaps till after Sunday. I did not mention my business, but requested them to acquaint him of my wish to see him the moment he arrived. I went back to my home, which, though now solitary enough, I filled in thought with the presence of its future mistress, and waited for three hours for the expected visit.

"No sign of visit or call at three o'clock; so I got impatient, and went down again to Dowdall's. No appearance yet of the absent man. I called again at five o'clock, at eight o'clock, and at half-past ten, with the same result. Had I succeeded at five o'clock, I would have tried the pass of Scollagh in the fine evening, and perhaps have enjoyed the sight of the sun setting over the Kilkenny hills; but after that I gave up the journey till next morning. During the evening I felt troubled enough, but I could not bring myself to borrow from any of my neighbours. I have ever had a deep dislike to borrowing except in cases of absolute necessity; and, besides, my intimacy with my acquaintance at Tombrick was not such as to entitle me to take that liberty. Moreover, I did not wish to give the impression of my being under any necessity for a loan. I went to bed not very comfortable in my mind, and awoke not much better.

"Of course I had gone to confession; and now, furnished with my marriage certificate, I had to walk about fourteen miles fasting, with the hope of going to communion in the chapel of Graigue, and to keep my mind in a collected and devout state during the journey. But my grand trouble was being obliged to ask the clergyman to trust me for the marriage fees till after my return.

"The freshness of the fine morning when I started, with the sight of the cheerful level sunbeams lighting up Mount

Leinster and Blackstairs, which rose so calm and stately before me, somewhat raised my spirits; and I was further cheered by the approaching enjoyment of the society of my dear Eliza. After my thoughts had given themselves a holiday for a few minutes, I strove to recall them, and to continue intent on the preparatory act. Notwithstanding the best intentions, and unceasing efforts to keep my faculties piously employed, my thoughts, after a brief interval, would begin to wander. One time I paused on the fine picture that could be made out of a cottage at hand, which was overshadowed by an ash tree; a forest of rich green and red house-leek on the roof; the outer sheds forming picturesque additions by the way in which they joined the house; the grassy slope that joined the bawn with the road; the brown drab path that wound zig-zag down this slope; the yellow and red pieces of ragged drapery spread on the bawn-ditch; the light grey smoke rising straight from the chimney, and the deep bluish green and purple of the mountain at the back. Then the pictures of future Sunday mornings in our own happy cottage filled my mind; and then, recollecting myself, I began my mental devotion again. I could not pass the little tavern of Kiltealy without dwelling on the breakfast enjoyed there a twelvemonth since, and on the other happy incidents connected with that day.

"The Raheens, where worthy Jemmy Carroll executed his dance with Miss Waters, lay to the right; but I was not in a mood to be amused with grotesque images. So I rounded the mountain, and held on vigorously towards Graigue. Fatigue and thirst began to affect me, and prevent a peaceful succession of serious or pious impressions; but I did my best, and recalled my wandering thoughts as soon as I became sensible of their escaping. I got within sight of the belfry at last, and with perspiring face and weary feet I arrived there, happily in time for Mass.

"On leaving the chapel I found Eliza at the door, and we went to her friend's house, where I had a warm shake-hands from her sister; and we sat down and enjoyed a cheerful breakfast: still not so entirely cheerful on my part, as it was a little sobered by the consciousness of a

nearly empty pocket. Some sly jokes were made by the sister and friend at our expense, but we bore them very well, 'considering'; and as soon as breakfast was over I arose and begged to be excused for a while, as I wanted to arrange preliminaries with the priest.

"I made my way to his apartments, and announced my business. I shewed him my certificate, and mentioned the circumstance of my being unprovided with the marriage fees, and the unlucky cause thereof; engaging to have the amount conveyed to him within a week. On hearing my statement, he civilly but firmly declined to celebrate the marriage rite; and I felt, on hearing his fiat, as if I was paralysed. After the first shock I represented the shabby appearance I must now make in the sight of my future wife and her friends, and the annoyance it would give her under our peculiar circumstances; and made a solemn promise to have the thing settled as I mentioned. In answer to my earnest appeal, he observed that if clergymen were to comply with all the applications like the present which were constantly made to them, the country would be filled with improvident and disastrous matches; and, in fine, that he could not do otherwise than refuse the request. I rallied to the charge, but was again repulsed, and was obliged to return to the little party in a very pitiable plight; and they saw at once by my face that something was wrong. Taking Eliza aside, I told her the exact state of affairs, and almost shed tears of vexation at the state into which my friend's negligence had thrown us. I recollected, even while I was speaking, that a gentleman-farmer who lived about three miles off on the road towards Borris, still owed me a balance of account for the instruction of his son since the former year. I mentioned the matter, and said I would set off at once, and try to get payment.

"My poor darling seemed to pity me very much, and only for the peculiar character of our trouble she would not let me, tired as I was, incur any more fatigue. However, my resolve was taken: I requested her to make some explanation to the girls; and taking temporary leave, I set out to try this last chance. I will not inflict any more of my troubles on you beyond the chief one, viz., that my

patron was not at home, and that in his absence nothing could be done. Well; I returned, depressed in mind and wearied in body to a degree such as few bridegrooms expectant have ever felt, and my jaded and sorrowful looks threw a gloom over the spirits of the little party before I opened my mouth.

"I now openly revealed my disappointments, and after visiting my indignation on all those who through negligence fail to keep their ordinary engagements, I mentioned that I would return home the same evening, and be back again fully prepared on Tuesday in the forenoon, if alive. I found not the slightest change in Eliza's loving demeanor towards me, nor in the cordiality of her friend. I thought that there was not as much show of good feeling on her sister's part, but perhaps I was mistaken. After some mutual condolence and encouragement, we sat down, and partook of the dinner which our kind friend had been busied about for some time, and by degrees our conversation became more lively.

"The sun by this time was looking out for his resting place, and I collected my forces for the journey back. In order to make their minds easy, I mentioned that I would make Castleboro my stage for the night, as it was five or six miles nearer than Tombrick. They came with me a quarter of a mile on this side the bridge; and I then bade them good evening, and made across the fields to the Cooliagh, instead of taking the longer route by St. Mullins. I was not able to get on fast; and found that I had to work through a morass before I could get to the base of the hill. A spur runs out from the mountain on the Carlow side, but it lay too far to my left hand to be made available.

"By the time I had picked my way between the bog-holes and the shaky, slimy patches, and got at last to the solid base of the hill, it was dark, and I directed my course up the steep as well as my failing strength and stiffened limbs permitted. Up I climbed, catching at bunches of heath to help my ascent, and hoping that when I got higher I would have better light. At last I got to the top of an eminence, foolishly imagining it to be the summit of

the hill, and then my spirits sank, for a second height still rose above me. There was no use in sitting down: I addressed myself to this new difficulty, and experienced more than one slip into a hole concealed by grass or heath, and a fall when my foot met an unexpected descent. If ever you are suffering from mental anxiety, or are tormented with useless regret, set out on a long journey; dig, or do some other severe work; clamber up Blackstairs or Mount Leinster; and you will feel much relieved of your mind's malady. The dreadful weariness I felt, and the exercise I was performing, sent my mid-day troubles out of sight for the time.

"The second eminence being won, still under the obscure vault, undefined and dreary, rose a third. To it I went, and about mid-way I began to represent to myself the feelings of my mother, of Theresa, of Eliza, and of yourself, if you could be conscious of the state of miserable prostration in which I was, whilst still obliged to continue my toilsome journey, if I did not choose to lie down and run the hazard of a night on the heath. The impression came on me, in spite of reason and experience, that, struggle as I might, I would never get to the top; and the idea of five or six dear creatures being all sensible of my plight, and grieving for my condition, had such an enervating effect that I nearly burst into tears.

"However, as soon as I became sensible of this approaching weakness, I strung my nerves anew, and climbed and struggled, till at last I had the comfort of seeing at my feet the dusky eastern slope of the White Mountain, the dim expanse of country below it, and the wide obscure vault of the heavens over all. I seemed as if I had acquired new powers, and sped down towards the left till I reached the road where her sister and yourself passed up on Saturday. Nothing occurred afterwards worth notice. As I passed the house of my relatives, the Henricks of Tomenine, I felt inclined to stop, but my anxiety to get forward was too urgent. Still I persevered; and now I can truly say that the most trying and fatiguing day in my past life has expired. I am sometimes subject to depressed spirits in the mornings, when I lie awake before rising, imagining

years spent in labour and poverty; and I feel at this moment that a few days such as yesterday would make me an old man in constitution years before the natural term.

"Now, Bryan, let us bounce up: hurry breakfast, and come a piece of the way with me. Stir, stir; I am impatient to get to Tombrick and back again."

Bryan.—It's easy for you to say, 'Bounce and go a piece of the way, Ned.' Unfortunately I cannot do either.

Edward.—Why: what's the matter?

Bryan.—Oh, matter enough! You have indulged me with your yesterday's adventures: now listen to my mischances the day before.

And the dismayed Edward had to endure the recital of the actual and possible troubles in which his negligence had involved his nearest connections. "Ah, Bryan," said he, in a melancholy tone; "I fear my future life will be a dismal one, and that I will be a cause of unhappiness to those I value most. What a hurry I was in at twenty-one years of age, to bring hardships and troubles not only on myself,—I think I could bear my own part with some fortitude,—but also on a soft young creature not able for them! Well, well, it can't be undone now. There is only one path open, and I will follow it with courage, and strive by patience and industry to lighten her burden and endure my own. God blesses our exertions when the intention is good. Bryan, do not let any report of my being here go over to our place. I will return this evening, and sleep at home; I will then set off fresh to-morrow morning, and have better news for you, please God, when I see this side of Cooliagh again. I hope that in spite of Theresa's resolves, you and she as man and wife will spend a happy day with *my* wife and myself before half a year is come and gone."

CHAPTER XL.

THE CHASE THROUGH RAIN.

A clatter was now arising from the kitchen; the crackling of dry furze and turf began to be heard; doors were opened; the clang of iron horse-shoes rung on the pavement; the lowing of cows was heard from the byre, and the cackling of hens and geese, and the gobbling of turkeys from the bawn, along with the objurgations and jests of the servants and labourers. In due time Edward was sitting at a dish of good sheeps'-milk pap, Mr. Roche and his mistress doing the honours; and conversation went on, such as all might find an interest in maintaining, between master, mistress, and children, servants, and labourers.

Towards the end of the breakfast, in walked Joanna. She said it was to borrow a churn-staff, but Mrs. Roche suspected it was to torment poor Tom; and if her surmise was correct, Tom seemed little afraid of the infliction. "Oh, Lord!" said she, when her eyes fell on Edward, "what brings the young master here? wait till I tell your father! And maybe he was out all night, when he might be snug and *combustible* in his own feather-bed. Indeed myself thinks but little of the same feather-beds, since a story I once heard about them."

Mrs. Roche.—What was the story, Joanna?

Joanna.—'Deed I have not time to wait and tell it. Can you spare me the churnstaff, Mrs. Roche?

Mrs. Roche.—To be sure I can; but you don't want me to rise from my breakfast to get it for you. Sit down and try our pap; Tom there will make room for you, and I think he won't grudge you a share of his plate.

Tom made a befitting move, and Joanna pretended to get in beside Edward, who, like a hard-hearted swain, would not make room for her, so she had no choice but to do as she was bid, or remain standing.

Mrs. Roche.—What has poor Tom done to you, that you can't bear to sit near him?

Joanna.—Oh, I'm afraid he'd turn out like Darby Toole when he used to be working at Mr. Dick Greene's. When

any *shuler* would come in at dinner time, he'd be always asked to come over; and Mrs. Green would say, for fun, 'To be sure you'll come: sit down there, and eat herring with Darby.' And though she'd take care that neither Darby nor the stranger would be stinted, Darby did not relish the joke; and one day, when the mistress was inviting a tall hungry gad of a fellow to join Darby, 'Oh, *musha !*' says the poor fellow, '*purshuin'* to the herring, and Denny, and yez all! If the dogs of the town came in I'm sure they'd be axed to come and eat herring with Darby?' Now I don't want to wear out my welcome, and try Mr. Sweetman's temper that way.

Mrs. Roche.—But about the feather-bed, Joanna?

Joanna.—It was all about a trial to see who'd be married to a great farmer's daughter once. The mother preferred one young man, and the daughter the other; so a bargain was made that whoever would thrash the most corn in two days should have the bride. The young woman gave a hint to the real sweetheart, not to work too hard the first day; so when it was over the mother was rejoiced to see the big heap that her old favourite had before him, and she set him to sleep on a beautiful feather-bed; but what does my young lady do? She took the pins out of the harrow, and spread some straw on it, and made her beau take his rest on it all night. The next morning, the feather-bed man was hardly able to stir with fatigue and the feathers, for his bones was as dry as powder, and the other boy was as brisk as a bee, and sledged away from dawn to dark, till his heap was so big that it might eat up the other fellow's. So I think he took her advice another time.

Mrs. Roche.—I think there is a change before death come on Joanna; she did not use one big word in these two stories.

Joanna.—And if I didn't, it wasn't for want of knowing 'em. I went over all the columns in the 'Universal,' and indeed up to *Antherantarians* and *Cozentiality*, and I used to win the pins three times every week in the class at Rathnure school. Yes, and I'd have learn'd grammar only I did not get time.

Mrs. Roche.—And what is grammar, Joanna?

Joanna.—I know that much, any how. It is the art of speaking English correctly.

Mrs. Roche.—Well then we must all have learned grammar: doesn't every one at the table speak it correctly enough?

Joanna.—Maybe if we speak it correctly, we go wrong in the pronuncision. Any how, the Inglified servants that comes to the castle pronounce a good many words different from us.

Brian.—We are not out of the hobble yet, Joanna, for I heard one tall gander of them say once, '*Oh, Mariar, 'ow 'ot my hears har!*' and he didn't learn grammar, I am sure. English grammar is more than what you say. It also teaches to write English correctly.

Joanna.—But Mr. Bowers hated grammar, and still he wrote most elegantly and perspicuously. Mr. Edward, will you tell us, what grammar *larns* us, if you please.

Edward.—It teaches, not *larns* us, Joanna, not to say, 'Tom Sweetman is a puny *sprishan*, but he *have* a sort of friendship for Joanna;' '*them is* as nice a shoe as ever you see;' 'the *times is* mortial hard—the—'

Joanna.—'Deed, Mr. Edward, you're like our *miel* cow that gives a pail full of milk, and then spills all with a *spang* of her foot. I won't ax you anything about grammar again. Somebody was saying that a lightness before death was coming on myself; but I think that it's on the old master it's coming. Did any one of yez ever take notice of him counting as much as five guineas at a time?

Mrs. Roche.—Catch him at it, indeed!

Joanna.—Well, believe me or not as you like; he counted out this very morning, just as I was coming out, a hundred guineas and fifty pounds in notes.

Mrs. Roche.—And what was that for, Joanna, do you know?

Joanna.—*Musha, the sarra know* myself knows; but Sleeveen was there, and Mr. Gladney, and long Watty Doyle of the wood; and he was telling them that he was just seeing if it was all right, before he'd give it up to Mr. Farmar of Dunsinane. It is all tax, tattheration to it, that

he *bees* collecting: I'm sure I don't think there can be luck or grace under the same roof with it. Well, Mr. Ned, I'll tell the mistress that you'll sleep at home to night, please God. Mrs. Roche, will you give me the churnstaff, if you please: I know I'll be kilt for staying out.

Mrs. Roche.—You may find it in the dairy, if you can depend on yourself that you'll touch nothing else.

Tom.—If you like, ma'am, I'll hand her out the engine, and watch her off the premises.

Joanna.—Indeed we don't want your watching, stay and scrape the pot, you big porpoise.

Tom.—Well now, I will watch you for that, especially for calling names; and only I haven't time, I'd go all the way home with you to enjoy the throuncing you'll get for staying out and *shanaching*, when you ought to be minding your business.

And out they go, rejoicing in their cunning manœuvre; and when out of hearing, though not out of sight, Joanna reveals some interesting piece of news to Tom.

Before the family separated for the day, Mr. Roche read a portion of a pious book, and then each set about his or her peculiar duty. Edward, on bidding Bryan good bye, was urged not to set off on that unnecessary journey after his fatigue of the day before, as he could get whatever he wanted from his father for him. He might better rest, and start across the Cooliagh next morning early, or go back this very afternoon. Edward would not accept the offer; he was much displeased with the friend who owed him the ten pounds, and intended to let him see that he was. Being aware of his feebleness of purpose on some points, he was proportionably obstinate on others. All he would agree to was, that if he did not succeed, he would accept the offer on his return.

As he approached the lime-kiln above the mill, he was hailed by Charley who was coming in the opposite direction. On being informed of his destination, he offered to see him over part of the way, being desirous to hear all the particulars of yesterday. So Edward related what the reader has already learned (mentioning incidentally the business his father was employed in that morning), as they

were proceeding up the Rathphelim road towards Kaim; Charley proposing to execute some commission in Knockmore, which would excuse his late attendance at the garden.

He did not thoroughly sympathise with his friend; for though of a moderately rollicking character, and not averse to courting in itself, he was not partial to forming a serious engagement till house, and land, and money were at his beck. However, he saw no use in finding fault in the present state of affairs, and after sundry pleasant sallies, and a promise to spend the evening at Edward's, he turned back through the fields by a short cut, in the direction of Gath-na-Coologe, intending to wade the Boro under the old castle; Edward going on towards Kaim and the wood of Kilaughrim.

Charley sprung briskly over hedge and ditch; and being very slightly burdened with temporal troubles, he whistled or sung without intermission till he was within a field of the road near the quarry pool. Thoughts of the match, and of Bryan's late accident, coming over him, he suspended his musical performances; and coming near a fence surmounted by a high crest of whin-bushes, he approached it, hoping to find birds' nests or a hare's seat in its recesses. The furze at this point grew thick on both sides of the fence, and between the two rows at the top he discovered a sort of sheltered alley in which a person might lie concealed. It was a pass for hares or rabbits, and had great interest in his eyes, for hunting was a passion with him. So he crept in, and lay down on his side, thinking what a capital hiding place it would be in the game of "Fox and Hounds." As he lazily reposed, and looked towards the castle through a thin withered portion of the screen, he saw a man getting over the fence which separated the next field from the road. There was nothing unusual in this, but he also observed this person standing on tip-toe on the fence, and warily looking about him on every side before descending into the field. Charley's eye now followed him with some interest, as he approached a spot on the inside of the fence where the bushes grew thickest. After a second anxious glance on every side, he cautiously opened

the bushes, and introduced a parcel into a cavity, and then hastily arranged the bushes as they were at first. He then passed into the adjoining field and made a circuit round the fence, as if to insure himself against danger from any prying eyes in that quarter. As Charley heard the steps approach in the very field from which he had just now climbed into his narrow bower, he gathered himself into as small a compass as possible, and even held his breath; but the man passed on, looking more to the opposite fence than to the one beside which he was walking. Charley, while he had an open view of him, began to think that the long, shapeless great coat, the hat turned up behind, and the breeches loose at the knees, were not altogether strangers to his eyes; and now, though his back was purposely turned to the man, the cadence of the steps confirmed his suspicions. On went the pace, still curving round in the direction of the road, till he saw his man get out upon it and advance towards Courtnacuddy.

"This is very odd," said Charley to himself; "let us explore the hiding place." So getting into the field which was the farther of the two from the road, he retraced the steps of the man with the turned up hat; and proceeding with considerable caution, he unearthed a good, coarse linen bag, and on shaking it he heard the chinking of many guineas, and felt the soft mass of paper which he suspected to be good bank-notes. A sudden fright seized him on finding himself in unwarrantable possession of so much property, but dreading to replace it for fear of being seen, he hastily thrust it into his pocket, and took the same route as the hider till he got back into his late resting place. Feeling now more at ease, he opened the bag, and as well as his disturbed nerves permitted, he calculated the contents at about one hundred guineas, and fifty pounds in notes. He then shut all up again; and after a few moments of indecision, he concealed it at the root of a bush, got down, and set off on Edward's trail. He guessed that he would overtake him, as he had said that he would pay a flying visit to a friend in Knockmore. Stepping out pretty briskly, he soon got to that village, and was passing on when he heard a great clatter in the stony lane behind

him; and, turning round, he saw an acquaintance in the full costume of a faggot-cutter running after him. He was aware of the man being on the shift for tithe due to the rector of a neighbouring parish. "Mat," said he, "what's the matter?"

"Och! plenty's the matter; the Peelers is after me."

"Stop," said Charley; "come into this bawn, and I'll be your patron."

In they went, and in a few seconds Charley, putting his own cloth cap in his pocket, invested himself with the caubeen, the skin gauntlet, the greaves and bill-hook of the fugitive; and directing him to keep himself concealed in one of the out-houses, he dashed through the haggard out into the lane again; and letting the police who were coming on at a lively run get a sight of him, he darted away at such a rate as soon secured respectable odds. "Stop, you scoundrel, or I'll fire," cried out their chief; but the fugitive did not obey the order. He merely flourished his weapon, and again laid leg to ground like one who was in earnest. The brandished weapon gave additional speed to the feet of the pursuers, but they had to do with one who was unmatched in the race at the gymnasia of Courtnacuddy and Cloughbawn. The road soon making a curve, he cleared the fence; and ran straight to where it was lost to sight at its descent to Och-na-Gour. On dashed the pursuers after him, clearing hedge and ditch, but, though active fellows, they found they were overmatched. Still they would not resign the chase, but pressed on for fear he might escape them when he got to the turn of the lane. They found on gaining that point that he had no intention of the kind, for he was then advancing leisurely up the ascent on the other side of the rivulet. A loud summons to stop met no better attention from the fugitive than before; and to the chance wayfarers, and labourers in the adjoining fields, and people standing at cabin doors, who questioned him as to the cause of his hurry, the simple response, "Police after me for tithe," served for a satisfactory explanation. When some of the questioners hazarded the query to the police, "Honest men, what are yez after the poor boy for?" and

heard that assault, battery, and robbery were in question, there was very little credit given to the information.

Through the quiet little village of Kaim, with its long low-roofed chapel and deserted mine works, the fugitive and the pursuers swept on, and to the oft-repeated inquiries, "Arrest for tithe!" was still the ready response. As Charles approached the high road which leads by the skirts of the wood from Moynart up to Blackstairs, he redoubled his speed, and gained considerable odds on his pursuers, though they did their utmost to close with him before he could gain the shelter of the forest.

At this crisis Edward was going down the pleasant path through the wood, and, turning round on hearing a noise, was surprised to see a figure standing in a heroic attitude on the stile, brandishing a bill-hook at some unseen persons or things, and then running down the path full speed towards himself. A little onward a bend in the path and some larger trees would shut out the objects lower down from any one in the neighbourhood of the stile. The wild figure flying past him beyond this angle, darted into a thick clump of underwood on the right hand, leaving Edward with his mouth open, and his intelligence very much at fault, as he gazed towards the vanishing point. In a moment he saw his friend, in the same trim as when he left him an hour before, dart across the path lower down in a stooping posture, and re-appear again almost immediately, after he had penetrated about four or five perches into the brush on the left side. His face was flushed as he came out, and he began to walk briskly down the path, beckoning to Edward to accompany him.

Nearly at the same instant the three policemen were heard in the rear, making down on them. "Don't open your lips for your life," said Charley, in an under tone, "till you know the lead I want you to follow."

The police cried out as soon as they came within hail, 'Boys, did you see a faggot-cutter run this way just now?'

Charley.—Yes, we did.

Police.—Which way did he take?

Charley.—He turned there above to the left, and is now getting on towards Mangan. What are you wanting him for?

Police.—Robbery; and maybe murder.

Charley.—Well, if it is murder, fire away; but I think there is little chance of securing him. Where did you catch sight of him first?

Police.—About four fields from the quarry hole on the Courtnacuddy road, where the assault took place.

Charley.—And do you know the man?

Police.—Not we; do you?

Charley.—To be sure we do. It is Mat Kavanagh from near Achsalach; he is no more guilty of robbery or murder than you or we.

Police.—Then why did he run off when he saw us about a field away?

Charley.—And don't you know that there is a decree against him for tithe, that he owes to the minister?

Police.—But confound himself and the tithe, it is not our duty to take him for it, and why should he lead us such a chase?

Charley.—Och! how did he know but you were the very captors appointed for his downfall? After all, perhaps, he is guilty of the robbery and assault as well as the other deficiency. Come, let us inspect his traces.

And they followed for a short distance the breach made by Charley on the side opposite to that where the spoil were deposited.

Edward.—I think you may safely give up the chase of poor Mat. While Charley was separated from me for a while, and I was coming on at this side of Bill Brett's, I met Mat going to his work; and it is out of the question that he could have been afterwards near the quarry, commit the assault, and be at his work when you caught sight of him.

"Oh, that settles the question," said Eccleso, the sergeant; "let us turn back. What a heat he has put us in! Bother himself, his bill-hook, his tithe, and his fright. By the way, Mr. Redmond, you look as if you were running at a lively rate yourself; you are blown."

Charley.—You may well say so. I was behind, and was coming on to overtake Mr. O'Brien up from Kaim, when I heard a clatter, and saw the runaway shake his edged tool. Gad, not liking the look of the simitar, and thinking

the fellow was mad, I took to my heels without remorse or shame; ran across the road, cleared the stile into the wood at a running leap, and down the path like a hare. When I heard him give a roar on the stile, I recognised Mat, and slackened my reins. I am sure you did not expect us to assist in his capture; we are not sworn constables; the tithe business was in our minds, and the bill-hook was an awkward-looking weapon.

The policemen at once agreed to cease further pursuit, and Edward requested to know who was the robbed and ill-treated party. One of the men answered, "Mr. O'Brien, if you are not on a matter of life and death, you had better return, as it is a relative of your own that has been attacked." Edward, getting frightened, urged question on question, till they reluctantly informed him that it was his father who was maltreated. Edward was very much afflicted; but Charley took an opportunity of whispering, that he had good reason to believe that his hurts were not of a serious character, and that there was a fair prospect of recovering the money. Edward was completely bewildered by Charley's disguise and equivocations; but, having great confidence in his resources, he felt he might trust to the encouragement.

Mr. Eccleso being now asked for the circumstances of the robbery and violence, gave the following precise statement, in an absurdly solemn, pompous manner:—

"My comrades and myself were proceeding towards the village called Moneyhore, when, as we approached the large quarry with the pool of clear water in it, on the northern side of the road, we heard such sounds as commonly proceed from persons who are much hurt. On coming nigh the spot from whence the sounds proceeded, we descried Mr. O'Brien extended on his back in the dry ditch, and moaning. Two of us went down, and were preparing to lift him into a reclining posture, but he exhorted us not to disarrange his position, for he had great apprehension that his bones were all either broken or dislocated. We interrogated him as to the cause of this melancholy accident, and he made response that he had been attacked by three dangerous-looking ruffians, who, he supposed, had

got intelligence of his intention of conveying to Dunsinane that morning a sum of £155, the result of his collection of county rates.

"We inquired the particulars of these marauders as to features, costume, and so forth; but he said that terror and indignation at losing the large sum of which he was merely the temporary custodian, had so bewildered his faculties, he couldn't specify any particulars, more than that one man seemed to be enveloped in a great coat, and had a crooked scimitar in his hand. On closer investigation, he affirmed that they prostrated him, and trampled on his body till, as he dreaded, his ribs were fractured, and his spine disjointed. There were some scratches on his exposed parts, such as the hands and the face, but the incisions were not of any noticeable depth.

"Responding to our inquiry as to the direction taken by the malefactors, he mentioned Knockmore; and so, leaving one of the party to get him conveyed to his own domestic mansion, assisted by some neighbours conducted to the scene of the catastrophe by casual chance, the other two men and myself proceeded in the direction indicated. When we were about four fields separated from the road, we came in sight of a man cutting bushes; and when he stopped to stare at us, I own I thought his appearance rather off the common. He seemed to brandish a crooked falchion in his right hand, his left was defended by what resembled a shield or buckler ('we call it a *dhurnoge*,' interposed Charles); and his nether limbs were incased in a kind of greaves. Consciousness of crime (as we thought) infused dismay into his soul, despite his offensive arms; and regarding our approach to his position in a right line, he incontinently took to flight; we at once entered on the chase, and here we are. Now, as further pursuit seems uncalled for, we will turn off here below to Moneyhore, whither our course was bent at first. The real criminal's traces must be again sought for nigher the scene of the crime. I suppose, gentlemen, you will return direct to Castleboro; but first let us all repose our limbs for a while."

If their minds had been at ease, two of the little com-

pany at least could have enjoyed a pleasant half hour looking over the forest which stretched away to the east of their position. There was a gradual descent from this stile, and they could catch glimpses of the path that led down through the wood, till it traversed a hollow about half a mile down, and then, mounting a gentle slope, was hidden in its descent towards the Urrin. Beyond the river, in the direction of Curraghgraigue and Ballymenane, their eyes rested on groups of larger trees; and farther off still, on the chain of low hills which runs from Shroughmore to Tombrick. More to the left reposed the purplish mass of Mount Leinster, and nearer and apparently higher shot up the dark crags of Blackstairs. To the east stretched the forest, diversified by the variously tinted tender foliage, and patches of sunlight and shade, as the clouds sailed by on the fine May morning. Gentlemen's seats, with the bright green lawns among the darker masses of the old trees, broke the uniformity of the leafy plain; the diversified country on both banks of the Slaney, surmounted by Vinegar Hill and the ruined windmill on its summit, varying the view on that side.

After a short rest the party separated; the police taking the road to the left, which leads towards Enniscorthy, and Edward and Charles retracing their steps. As Edward continued to feel great uneasiness and depression, Charles tried to console him as well as he could. "Edward, you need not be in such agitation. I feel there is some great mistake in the policeman's story." He then related the adventure of the money-bag, concealing his suspicion of the man's identity, and continued, "I have secured the spoil, and let us hope that by its restoration we may obtain a lever to move your obstinate parent from his present hostile position. Excuse the mechanical allusion, Ned; just after learning a new lesson, we are always eager to display our lately-acquired knowledge. On my way I was overtaken by poor Mat Kavanagh, who is under a cloud just now, and waiting for the next Newfoundland vessel that sails from Ross.

"He wore just then the arms which late I bore."

[See *Enfield's Speaker*, and excuse the quotation, Ned], and little dreamed, poor fellow, what the police took him for. As I have hitherto met no match at a foot-race, I donned his weeds, and what in the worthy Mr. Eccleso's eyes seemed sword and shield. In the meantime he concealed himself in Shamus Gurm's cow-house in Knockmore; and while I was enacting Reynard,

'I roused my vigour and increased my speed,'

(as Pope would have said) by the stirring lines in the *Lady of the Lake*."

Edward.—Where in the name of wonder did you procure that work?

Charles.—In the library at the Castle. Where else could I have a chance? I called one holiday, while the family were at Woodstown, and was shown over the house till we came to the library; and then my eyes first met those pictures of Highland scenery and of social life there in former times. Ah, Edward, I suppose I will never again enjoy such mental delight as I felt for the four hours it took me for to get through the poem. The fine apartment in which I sat, the beautiful view from the window over the lake and the old lawn to the ivy-covered old castle, and the large trees scattered at each side; the vigorous poetry, the novelty of the scenery, the romance of the story, and the vivid pictures of clannish life which I instinctively felt to be so true—all these seen through my excited and glowing imagination lifted me completely out of the every-day life of labour. For days afterwards my mind was filled with the poetic images of the poem; and I found myself unconsciously repeating any stray lines which remained fixed on my memory. Even to-day, as the dark-coated boys caught sight of me, I sung out—

'Speed, Charley, speed; the *horse's* hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.'

And as I dashed across the fields at this side of Bill Brett's, I exclaimed—

'With short and springing footsteps pass
The trembling bog and false morass.'

And when the people ran to the roadside, and the women and children stood at the bawn-gates, I was tempted to perpetrate the following travestie :—

> 'Fast as the faggot-cutter flies,
> From fields and bawns inquiries rise ;
> From furzy knocks, from ridges brown,
> Fast poured the lazy workers down.
> Nor slacked the messenger his pace ;
> He told the fib, he hid his face ;
> And pressing forward like the wind,
> Left brave old Eccleso behind.'

Edward.—For the love of goodness, Charley, don't poison my ears with your confounded parodies. I look on burlesques of works imbued with the true poetical spirit in no better light than the daubing of paint upon the features of some noble boy or beautiful girl, till the countenance becomes like that of some low, vulgar creature. But what are we to think of the polieman's report of the state in which he saw my father, and the account he gave of the attack ?

Charley.—Really I cannot tell ; but comparing Eccleso's narrative with the circumstances I have witnessed myself, I think there could have been only one robber engaged in the attack ; and I hope we'll find that your father was more frightened than hurt.

At Kaim they stopped for a little rest and refreshment. Edward did not feel much need of repose or stimulant, for his mind was very much disturbed by his own concerns, and the mystery connected with the morning's adventure. I retain a pleasing though faint image of that little hamlet of Kaim ; the road is somewhat higher than the ground-level of the neat little thatched chapel and the other houses ; the trees affording a snug shelter to the humble building. A clear stream bubbles by, and with its sparkling wavelets and clear gravel bed, seen through the elder bushes, gives an impression of decency and cleanliness which do not always attach to clusters of Irish cottages.

The fellow travellers measured back their way through Knockmore, found the hoard safe in its hiding place, and arrived at home about half-past one o'clock. Charley requested his companion to leave all explanations to him-

self, and they entered the kitchen where the maimed man was reposing in the settle bed, as he would not consent to be taken upstairs. He languidly looked at the new comers, but made no motion, nor opened his lips to greet them. Edward stooped over him, and with some emotion expressed his sorrow to see him in that state, and asked him how he felt. "Ah," said he, very faintly; "I cannot tell. I feel as if every rib in my body was broken, and my inside put *threenachela;* don't touch me, I'm afraid I'll fall in pieces." "Have you sent for Dr. Macartney?" said Charles; "his presence would be very desirable." Now this gentleman superintended a dispensary which was improvised out of one of Mr. Graham's out-offices, and was supported by the Castle and the neighbouring gentlemen-farmers around, and was a great blessing to the neighbourhood. "Ah, what can he do for me?" said the patient; "I think if he attempted to handle me, I would give up the ghost."

Edward's mother and sister now came over to him, and, after a family greeting, told him that Dr. Macartney had been sent for, but was not at home. However, he was expected from one moment to another.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" said the poor bruised man; "a body won't be let die in peace. I tell you he can't do the least good for me."

"You are mistaken, Mr. O'Brien," said Charles. "I have seen him open a man's body, take out part of his inside, examine it, pare away unsound parts, and then put it back carefully, and stitch the skin again as neat as Miss O'Brien would hem a shirt. Yes, and out of three that he treated that way, two were only called off."

"Ah, what feelings some people have! How can you all listen to such heartless discourse?"

"Heartless, *inyah!* Well, if ever I do a good turn again, I'll give the dogs of the town leave to call me an ass. What do you say to this, Mr. O'Brien?" said he, pulling out the canvas sack, and rattling the guineas. "Ain't I better to you now than a bad son-in-law?"

There was a general thrill of joyful excitement as they all crowded round our hero; and thanks were offered to

heaven, and silent prayers put up. The poor matron, dropping on her knees by the settle-bed, leaned over her husband; but she was dismayed by a violent flush of blood that ran up to his very temples, and the convulsive working of his fingers, and his sharp groans. "Ah," said she, "I fear that he can't stand it out longer now, at any rate. Pray to God, Phil dear, for strength and calmness, and let us be thankful for his great mercy in enabling us to give up this money without impoverishing ourselves."

The disabled man still said nothing; but he closed his eyes, and shut his lips hard, as if he was striving for resolution for something or other; the flush departed, and he requested in a low tone a drink of water. Mrs. O'Brien ran for the drink, and Bryan, coming in at the moment, asked if he might raise his head a little. Within a very few seconds a change for the better seemed to come over the victim; and instead of repelling the offer, he took it in a very good part, and even faintly thanked the rejected suitor. So the drink was administered, and the sick man lay down gently, but not without a heavy moan or two.

"Do you think, Philip, that you could bear now to be removed to your own bed?"

"Well, I'll try, so that you handle me gently." The attempt was made, and was crowned with a fair degree of success; and before our chief personages who were assembled in the bed-room separated, Mrs. O'Brien requested to be informed of the particulars of the recovery of the money. Charles gave the same account as he had done to Edward, and expressed his opinion that the particulars might better be confined to themselves for a few days, till poor Mat would have a tub of salt water under him.

Mrs. O'Brien.—But, Charley, tell us, do you think you have any knowledge of the person you saw hiding the money!

Charley.—Mrs. O'Brien, that is a question I am not at all willing to answer. All that I can say is that if I come in *contrain* with him, as Joanna would say, and if I find him truly penitent for this and his other misdeeds, he will not have to lay his death at my door. I protest, there is Dr. Macartney's voice in the kitchen; let us clear out,

and Mrs. O'Brien, if blood is to be drawn, I'll hold the basin."

So with a great deal of useless bustle the surgeon was introduced, and the room cleared. From the neighbouring kitchen the eager listeners were dismayed by a loud bawl or grunt, as the practitioner pinched or squeezed some part of the poor sufferer's anatomy rather more than the occasion appeared to require. After a while he made his appearance, and relieved them by saying that the injuries were not so grave as Mr. O'Brien had feared; and that all he required was a few strips of diachylon, rest, and a profuse perspiration.

Book VI.

RELIEF.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE EVE OF THE GREAT DAY.

The dinner had been in abeyance to this time, owing to the fright the family had got, and the occupation of the settle-bed; but now that the money was recovered, and the fears about the master's life allayed, people began to get hungry. So the women set to work, and the table was soon provided with flat wheaten and oaten cakes, pats of butter, and noggins of mixed milk; and all sat down and enjoyed a cheerful meal.

At Charley's suggestion, Tom Sweetman was commissioned to walk as far as the Stone Pound, to apprize the police sergeant stationed there that the money had been recovered, and that Mr. O'Brien was considered out of danger. This was done in order to allay the existing excitement, and to save the constables from unnecessary fatigue. Had I time to walk so far with Tom, I would like to let my reminiscences linger for a while on its spacious fives-alley, and the little paddock at its rear surrounded by lofty-trees. What a splendid piece of colouring seemed to my uneducated eyes the noble cat on the sign-board of one of the taverns, as he stood with considerable ease and grace on a round stool, and delighted the beholders by pretending to draw sweet music from the Irish bag-pipe! Delightful was the shaded road that led southwards from the village in the direction of Taghmon, with the large old trees and the patriarchal-looking manor-house of the Robinsons on the left hand! May this neighbourhood have justice done to it some day by M. G. R., of the *Irish Penny Journal.*

Mr. O'Brien called Edward, Charles, his wife, and daughter, and Bryan to his bed-side when dinner was over, and addressed them as follows:—"Thank God for his mercies, and this brave lad for his courage and exertions. I must ask you now, Charley, to accompany Edward to Dunsinane with that unlucky bag, and deliver it up to Mr. Farmar. I will not rest till I hear the money is safe with him. You can take two of the horses; I will send over to the garden to have an apology made for your absence to-day, and I am sure if ever you hear a word about it from the master, it will not be an unpleasant one. Come back again in the evening. We must have over all your family, Bryan, not forgetting yourself."

Poor Theresa, strong-minded as she undoubtedly was, had a tender loving heart; and these few words set that heart beating so quickly, that some of the pure blood that flowed through it found its way to her cheeks; and she withdrew as soon as she conveniently could to enjoy her sweet but troubled sensations.

Charley and Edward then went forth on their rough-coated steeds, and had a pleasant evening ride. Beyond Courtnacuddy they turned down the green slope to let their beasts take a drink from the stream which issued from the sweet spring of *Thubber Gal;* then went down the road to Dranagh mill and bridge, and up the furzy slope beyond. When they had passed down through the fair-green and village of Moneyhore, I wonder how they got up the steep hill of Scobie. My impression of that hill presents a wall stopped about half way in its downfall. I have seen horses with loads behind them climb to the top, but cannot tell how or wherefore, as they might as well have gone a fine level road from Moneyhore village to the Leap, and thence towards Scobie, with ease to their cattle, and at no greater expense than five minutes' delay.

They have reached Dunsinane, given up the ill-omened treasure, leaped over some fences by the road-side on their return, greeted the Haydens and Fitzharrises of Dranagh, and Edward Brophy and Tommy Mulligan of Courtnacuddy; joked with Pat Behan about the pattern he got at the execution; entered the little chapel, and returned

thanks for God's mercies shown that day; inspected the spot of the accident, and finally arrived at home. Edward, from whose mind some portion of his own cares and troubles had been banished by the hurried succession of events since morning, returned in a rather depressed state, as he would now have to call on his mother or Bryan for a loan of money for the requirements of the following day, and was besides tormented by some misgivings as to the impressions under which Eliza and her sister must have remained since yesterday.

On entering the kitchen they found the Roches assembled, and on enquiring for the invalid they were glad to find he was much better, having been since subjected to a profuse perspiration. He had requested all to assemble in his bed-room immediately on their return. So they filed into the chamber, and disposed themselves as conveniently as they could to hear what he had to communicate. After answering the inquiries of Edward and Charles, he raised his head a little, and said:—"Mrs. Roche, I have opposed for a good while the wishes of the two families. There is no use now in going over the reasons why I did so, but within these last few hours I have been brought to think that I have not been influenced by a single-minded wish for the real happiness of my children, and I have been justly punished for my worldly spirit. I am under some security for Mr. Mac Cracken by which I will suffer, as I have given up any notion of a connexion with him. So now, to repair as soon as I can some of the mischief I have done, Bryan Roche, you have my free and full consent to take Theresa for your wife, if neither of you have changed your minds since yesterday. Though I am not the rich miser I am thought to be, she shall not enter your house empty-handed. May God grant his blessing to you both; you have the blessing of her mother and myself from the bottom of our hearts."

Mrs. O'Brien leant over her husband and kissed him affectionately, and his happy new relatives all pressed his hand with grateful and happy looks. Edward and Charley were in great glee, and shook hands all round; and it is supposed that the hands of the happy and confused

"affianced" also found each other out by chance in such a disturbed state of things.

"Well, well," said the sufferer, when a little quiet was restored, "I hope Mr. Mac Cracken will have some consideration, and not torment me with his complaints for not holding out more determinedly for him. He will now get the cold shoulder, I fear, from any desirable young woman that lives within any reasonable distance, after all the time he has lost looking after Theresa. Ah, Bryan! I wish you would strive to look the gentleman more than you do; something now like poor Nick's air and manner."

Bryan.—Faith, Mr. O'Brien, it is not an easy matter for a farmer born and bred, and that has no ambition, to have the manners of a gentleman or look like one. But when I am married, if it gives the least gratification to my wife, I will go to the tailor that works for the castle, and get a full suit the same pattern as the young master wears, and go in it to the next fair of Moneyhore or Enniscorthy; and if I am mistaken for a gentleman, we will then know what is best to be done.

Charley.—That will be really doing the thing with spirit; but as to Mr. Nick, I don't think you will be troubled with his complaints for a while. He started this afternoon, as we heard, while we were coming through Courtnacuddy, in company with a rough-looking customer that has been on a sort of visit with him for some days. Some thought they went match-making up to Ballymurphy in Carlow; others that it was not with his own good will he was going at all; time will tell. Ah, Mrs. Roche! why have not I my fortune made, and Peggy twenty years old? I feel I could pluck up courage enough this moment to do the fatal deed.

Mr. O'Brien.—Well, Charley, I wish I had a second daughter with three hundred pounds fortune in her pocket: you should be as welcome to her as the flowers in May. Now I wish to be left alone. When you all are on your knees this evening, pray for me, and pray each for yourselves, to be strengthened against temptation. Bridget, honey," said he to his wife, who lingered about him, "you must send for the priest to come to me to-morrow. It is

now seven years since I was at my duty; and a fine hard task it will be to go through it properly. Well, well, it will never be done if we don't make a beginning. If Sleeveen is loitering about the house any where, tell him I want to speak to him."

Sleeveen was found, and remained closeted with his master for half-an-hour; and at his coming out, his foxy and supercilious face was observed to have lost about two-sevenths of the usual quantity of self-satisfaction and contempt of his neighbour that usually adorned it.

Joanna was somewhat out of sorts and fidgetty while the family council was held. She lost very little time as they were coming forth, till she was mistress of the resolutions agreed to; and then she ran and hugged the bride elect, then the bride's mother, then Peggy, then Pat; then was going to repeat the ceremony on Bryan, but a preventive check interposed. Being evidently annoyed that there should be any bar to the exhibition of her delight, she grasped the children by the hand, and began to dance and sing. The melody consisted of one line, and ran thus,

"My uncle Jack is dead, and we'll have all the money."

Moll Miskelagh or a neighbour of hers (see the sketch in the *Irish Penny Journal* by my gifted countrywoman, M. G. R.) having performed the duties of a slave during her husband's lifetime, was bequeathed on his death as much tobacco and candles as served for his wake, and the shop sign into the bargain. His brother having got the rest of his property, one of his (the brother's) sons was heard chanting for joy one summer evening the lay just quoted by Joanna, and which is probably yet remembered in the neighbourhood of Tomanearly. This by way of explanation of our songstress's selection. However the songstress and the children were soon obliged to desist from their nonsensical sport by sheer fatigue. The joy of others of the inmates was not less deep and heartfelt, though not so boisterously expressed, and two or three pleasant hours passed unnoticed over their heads.

When the Roches rose to go home, Theresa, Edward, and Charley went to see them beyond the geese. I wish

that the dear companion of my own childhood, Turloch O'B. of Cromogue, had not omitted this ceremony on one occasion, or rather had put me beyond the big gander one evening, as I was leaving him; for the thief caught me in the lane, bit my legs, slapped me with his wings, and nearly frightened my life out. May his memory be without honour, and his tomb forgotten! Our company, however, were too strong and too numerous to dread the gander, or even the gander's father.

Theresa dutifully kept close to the side of her new mother, who throwing her strong arm round her, gave her a vigorous squeeze or two; but before they had got through the lane, Mrs. Roche recollected that she wanted to consult Edward about a choice of books for Peggy; and then the procession suffered this change. Mr. Roche and Charley led the way, Pat and Peggy followed, Mrs. Roche and Edward came in their wake, and the others brought up the rear. When they arrived at the other bawn-gate and separated, Bryan prolonged his enjoyment by pretending to feel it his duty to see the young lady safe home again. I do not profess to report the discourse, because I was not listening, and neither of the speakers could be afterwards induced to betray what the other acknowledged. From snatches caught here and there by Charley, they seemed to congratulate each other on the happiness of being at liberty to speak openly of their mutual affection for each other.

Our "lame lover" at last took leave for the night at the gate, and Charley went on his way, being first exhorted to look in on them next evening, when his day's work was over.

As Theresa and Edward turned into the bawn, a little boy who lived in a cabin by the neighbouring road-side, came up, handed him a note, and merely saying he was bid to give it into his own hands, cleared off before there was time for any questions. Before Edward could get a light to inform himself of the contents, he was told that his father had been enquiring for him; so, leaving his curiosity unsatisfied, he handed the note to Theresa, told her she might open it, and presented himself to his father. The

old man spoke very kindly to him, said he was aware of his approaching marriage, that he was far from feeling any satisfaction at it, but would not add to his discomfort by withholding his consent. Therefore he was quite welcome to bring his wife in the first instance to Castleboro, in order that she might get acquainted with her new relatives, and that they might all lay their heads together as to the next best steps to be taken. Here was a revolution in Edward's favour, as welcome as unexpected. His heart was filled with joy, so that he could hardly find words warm enough to declare his gratitude. He acquitted himself as well as he could, and returned to his mother and sister who had just finished the second perusal of the letter. He seemed to walk on air, and in a few rapid and unconnected sentences told them his news. He was presently amazed by the troubled and doubtful expression on their faces; and changing his tone, he asked rather reproachfully, if that was the way they sympathized with his happy feelings. "Indeed, Edward, we rejoice in any good that occurs to you; but if we give too much way to joy, we will be liable to be too much cast down when we meet with what is disagreeable."

"Well, this is very strange! You two, that always seemed to be sorry for my father keeping me at such a distance, are not a bit glad now when he has begun to act so cordially: I cannot understand it." The mother made no answer, but hung down her head; and Theresa with tears in her eyes handed him the open letter which had been lying beside her, and which till now was forgotten by Edward in his ecstasy. Fearful of some terrible news, he ran over the lines with throbbing pulse and burning eyes; but such was his agitation that when he came to the end he did not yet seem to have mastered the drift of the letter. He then began, and read it through again; and without further remark dropped into a chair by the table; laid his face on his folded arms; and for some time gave no sign of consciousness except by a convulsive action of the fingers which still grasped the paper. After a few minutes, his mother endeavoured to console and rouse him from the stupor into which he had fallen, but it would seem as if he

was not sensible of the meaning of her words: so she came over and gently shook and roused him. She would gladly have left him untouched, on seeing the meaningless expression of his eyes, and the despondency of his whole countenance. However he made an effort, and after a few unconnected remarks assured them he was sorry to inflict so much annoyance on them; that he was completely unsettled by the news; and that he would go to bed, and strive in sleep to escape from the intolerable pressure he was suffering. They prayed that God would send him comfort, and exhorted him not to give too much way, as everything but sin happens with the permission of God; that no unbearable trial is sent to any one, and that every visitation turns out for the best in the end, when received with resignation.

Taking leave of his mother and sister, he then went to his bed-room, and once more read the letter which had thrown him into such a suffering state, and which was as follows:—

"SIR,—These lines come to save you from all further trouble about what was carried too far, and still did not go far enough. Many trials are sent to young persons, and many others they bring on themselves with their eyes open. More than a year has been wasted and gone, and nothing got by any one but trouble and sorrow. There is no use now in finding fault, but this comes to say that on yesterday you saw my sister for the last time, please God, that you will ever see her, and that I have her free consent for saying so. When you receive this letter she will be with her own friends, and hopes you will not follow her to give annoyance.

"Your humble servant,
"REBECCA RICHARDS."

Having finished the perusal, Edward laid the letter on the side of the bed, stretched himself on a form with his fingers clasped under his head, and endured for two long hours a rush of conflicting thoughts, feelings, and purposes, without consciousness of the duration of time. One, whose

passions were unroused, and whose head was clear, would have simply looked at the fact of being rejected; and, putting a resolution of seeking out and recovering his lost love in one scale, and a contrary resolution of sitting down and enduring the desertion with calmness in the other, would have weighed the merits and defects of each proceeding with steady hand and judicious eye. But unhappily his nature was vehement as well as intellectual; and hence what took place in his mind resembled the confused thronging, intermingling, and evolving of a crowd of shapeless objects in an obscure light, rather than the orderly arrangement and procession of the same objects according to their importance and relation to each other. Thus over the disturbed mirror of his mind passed and returned, sunk and rose images of past happy hours spent in loving discourse, a future blank of joyless existence, interference of the sister of his love, her own want of affection, or feebleness of character, her countenance lighted by affection, then marked by scorn or contempt of himself, wounded feelings, resentment for want of confidence in him, the desirableness of making an attempt to find her and get an explanation, the probability of this only bringing on further affronts, the likelihood of her being purposely beset and deceived, and wishing only to be convinced of his truth, renewed anger at her uneasiness of belief, and a return to more gentle feelings. Passion being laid aside, what did Christian duty point out to be done? At the end of some hours' torture, the chief cause of which was the difficulty of finding out the proper course to adopt, the tumult began to subside, and he came to the determination of making a vigorous effort to win back his lost treasure.

According as the resolve acquired strength, a certain comfort came over his perturbed and miserable spirit; and so, becoming calm by degrees, he was at last enabled to go to his prayers; and when he got into bed he slept many hours without interruption.

At an early hour next morning, Edward was up and about; Theresa was equally on the alert on this occasion, and to her he revealed his determination to seek the sister,

and by some means discover Eliza's present abode; to get an interview with her, even in the midst of her most unwilling relatives, and if her love was at an end, or her giving up the connexion arose from a sense of duty, then would he make up his mind to resign all claims on her, and endeavour to turn his attention to a worthy discharge of his duty. If the step she had taken arose from a misconception of his conduct, and if love was not extinct, he would take a post-chaise from Enniscorthy to Graigue, get the marriage ceremony performed, and return with his bride at once to Castleboro. Theresa neither opposed nor encouraged him; but Edward, having decided on his line of conduct, set little value on the opinion of others. When once he had made a resolution he went through with it determinedly, uncertainty of purpose being the dreaded failing to which he was subject. His fancy was of a lively and discursive character, his impulses vehement when roused, and the exercise of his judgment was continually impeded wherever his passions had a voice, or his imagination could act on the subject under consideration.

He told his sister that if he was unsuccessful, he would not return to throw gloom on the present happiness of the families; he would set off at once to his school, and strive to acquire composure or indifference before he would present himself again. Now that his resolve was taken, there was a calm, determined air about him. He exhorted Theresa to suffer no anxiety on his account; that she knew his elasticity of spirit; that if he succeeded, his wife and he would soon be with her, and increase her newly-found happiness; and that, at the worst, he would only have to labour harder in body and mind till new impressions had time to assuage the pain of old recollections. At last he was gone, and Theresa left to her own reflections, which, though somewhat sobered by sympathy with her brother, were on the whole of a happy character.

The clergyman who had been apprised of Mr. O'Brien's desire to see him, called about one o'clock, and remained with him upwards of an hour.

Some days having passed, we find that Theresa, her mother, her future mother-in-law, and Joanna, were at

Enniscorthy last market-day, making needful purchases in the way of attire. Bryan, on his side, has not been idle, and the prime visiting tailor of Bantry, Tom Blanche, has been sitting on the large kitchen table for about a week, turning out from under his goose master-pieces of body-coats, waistcoats, and trousers. For the last couple of days there has been great scrubbing of milk-pails, tubs, dressers, pewter plates and dishes. The dark oak tables, chairs, and cupboard in the parlour have been intimate with soft-soap and bees'-wax; its boarded floor has been washed, and the earthen floor of the kitchen and bed-rooms have been scraped, scrubbed, and sanded, and all the dirt in the bawn swept down into the lower dyke.

It is a point of country etiquette that Bryan is to have very few uninterrupted interviews with his betrothed till after their marriage. Indeed the needful preparation has kept the time of the young couple pretty well occupied.

The bride's father is not in very good spirits, chiefly on account of the quantity of spirits of another kind which the occasion has obliged him to purchase. His wife, though proud and happy to have her daughter wedded to one whose goodness of disposition and steadiness have been known to her for years, does not conceal from herself the many trials which the happiest wife has to endure. Mr. Roche says little; he is happy in the happiness of those around him; but Mrs. Roche is in complete enjoyment of the bustle about her, and of the happy issue of the tangled courtship. The present occasion reminds her of some similar ones when her own house was in its glory, and her father and brothers, with their servants and workmen, were sufficient to "clear a fair." She reminds her new daughter that she must begin in time not to give Bryan his way. "For them crathers of men isn't a bit of good to hold their own in many things, such as law-shuits and that; they'd rather be left at their aise than stand on their own rights often. She knew that Bryan's blood was soon up if he saw a friend fighting with odds against him, or if he heard any one insinuating evil of any of his relations; but a 'sleeveen' of a fellow would outwit him in fair or market,

and twist him round his little finger, or get him to go bail for him in a debt, so he would. You may be as fond of him as you like—I won't hinder you; and I know you'll never let him be seen at Mass or market without a pin in his collar, or with a hole in his stockings; and I'm sure you won't be found at your tay and hot cake, and he eating a re-heated pyatee, like Peg Branagan, that I seen giving a cup of could tay and a bit of bread to her 'sprishan' of a man, that was sittin' by the kitchen fire, and her grand company sittin' in state, *mauya*, at the parlour table! Ah, if I had the opportunity, wouldn't I comb her head for her!"

"With a flax-card, I suppose, ma'am," said Charley Redmond, who happened to be in hearing.

"And if I did, it's just what she deserved."

These observation were made in Mr. O'Brien's kitchen, with the servants and workpeople around, some seated on the settle, and others on short forms and stools opposite them, and all employed in reducing the heap of good cup potatoes that lay on the table between them, the pleasant task being made more pleasant by sundry noggins of good milk, one between every two neighbours, or one to each individual in some cases.

Mr. Roche was taking his rest in a straw chair, and Mr. O'Brien was inducing him to speak on religious topics. He had considered his neighbour a voteen and twaddler, but now began to look on him as a wise man bent on securing the one thing needful—eternal happiness.

Three old acquaintances, Shān Burke, Bet-na-Dheega, and Pat Neil were taking their supper along with the rest, and some other friends joined the circle from time to time. We shall not trouble the reader to salute them as they enter. When they have anything to say, let them say it; and we will listen to them if their information is worth it.

Theresa, Joanna, and another young woman had milked the cows at the proper time; and Bryan, and Charley, and Tom Sweetman were so apprehensive of these (generally reputed) quiet and domestic animals kicking up their heels at unexpected times, and spilling the milk, or dangerously

frightening the milk-maids, that with undaunted resolution they stood in a dangerous vicinity to the horns of the beasts, to avert such calamities. They got small thanks for their fearless devotion to the safety of the fair operators; for Mrs. Roche took occasion to observe in the course of the evening, that more milk would have been got, and less time spent about it, if they had left the girls to themselves.

"Here's gratitude!" said Charley. "Mrs. Roche, you remind me of many a one in the barony of Bantry, slaving out in heat and cold, and going to fair and market, and their ungrateful people at home, that they do it all for, not having a kind word to give them in exchange for the clothes they wear, and the bread they eat, and——

Shan Burke.—Bread, indeed! I hope the good Christians may never be without the pyatees itself to give us poor thravellers, an' some of us kep out of our little property by a red-haired woman. But wait till the *five* and twenty-fifth day of March next, an' see if I don't *inject* her out of house and home! Have any of yez a bit of tobaccy? I'm a'most starved for want of a *shough*.

Bet.—God help you, poor man; but don't talk of dying, Shān *asthore*. No one dies at all; it is only a change of diet they get. Myself is just as badly treated, an' it ōny yesterday that I warned Mr. Eastwood to be off, and leave his glebe-house to myself that's the lawful heir to it; an' all he *do* is to say, 'How are you, Betty?' There's manners for you; one of them pups along the road would only say *Bet*; an' he bring me into his *brevary* (a mistake of Bet's for *library*), and make his ramrod of a servant-boy fetch me a plate of cold meat an' a heel of white loaf. An' so when I bruk my fast, I couldn't keep up the spite, an' he giv me a fi'penny, an' so I come off an' slep at Mrs Wiseman's in Killeen.

Pat Neil.—'Deed, Bet, I think you're taking leave of your seven senses of late. I'll engage the ministher wont budge a foot these hundhert years to come, if it was to keep the teeth fast in your head; an' if you don't show some better wit, I wont be seen walking the same side of the road with you. I suppose yez didn't hear the new

song that I'm makin' to go a courtin' with to Jemmy Culleton's purty daughter next Sunday?

Charley.—Let us have the song, Pat. Silence all of you for Pat's song.

Pat Neil.—But maybe you'd go yourself and sing it, and get the bride instead of me that made it.

Charley.—I give you my word I will not, Pat. Square your elbows, clear your throat, and repeat the melody.

Pat Neil.—Ah, d—— trust you! I would not depend on you any more than on the rotten shank of a tobacco-pipe, if Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Roche doesn't go bail for you.

The ladies appealed to entered into the required securities, and Pat chanted the following words to an original air of his own composition, keeping meanwhile a suspicious eye on his treacherous rival, and blending the past, present, and future in one action.

"PAT NEIL'S COURTSHIP.

"It's early on next Sunday morning,
Before the sky-lark shakes his wing,
It's I'll be up and get a shavin',
With my white shirt-collar round my chin.

"Then I'll step out and off to chapel,
And eat a plate of stirabout '—

Charley.—I think, Pat, you might as well take your breakfast before you start. They don't provide refreshment at the chapel.

Pat Neil.—And sure so I will. Didn't I say as much in the ballad? Mrs. Roche, will you tell that ignorant boy to hold his tongue?

'And when I'm kneelin' in the chapel
As pious as any boy can be,
The female girls, while they're readin'
Their 'Poor Man's Manual,' peeps at me.
With my good new pair of leathern crackers,
And my new shirt collar 'round my chin."

Charley.—Ah, Pat, for decency's sake, keep the crackers more out of sight, and so many *female girls* listening to you.

Pat Neil.—Blast! blow! sink! and swim! tundher and fire! Mrs. O'Brien, if you don't make them scruff o' the world hold their tongues, I'll go mad and break things; I'll set the house *afire;* I'll knock the cat on the head; I'll walk off and sleep at the mill, and then see how *lude* you'll look at mass next Sunday with all the people talking about you. Can't you whist, you tame nagurs! You pot-wallopers! and not be putting me song out of me head; and then maybe it's the back of her hand Miss Nancy will be giving me.

'With my good'—

"No, no: I said that before. I wasn't able to put the next verse in rhyme; but it tells how I walked to Mr. Culleton's after Mass, and found the big pot full of bacon and cabbage on the fire that was enough to roast an ox, and the goose turning on the spit. but I'll get Paddy Quigly to put jingles on it.

'With my good new pair,' &c.. &c.
"'How are you, Pat,' says nice Miss Nancy,
'Pure and hearty, Miss,' says I;
'And if you don't combine to wed me,
It's for your sake I'll surely die.
For the maids is like the summer morning
When the meadows shines with dew,
And if you don't combine to love me,
It's on this flag I'll die for you.
With my good new pair, &c., &c.

"So when she sees there's only one thing—
To be my bride or see me dead,
She puts her hands'——

"Easy! how does the rest go? She puts her hands—— she puts——. How'll I bring in the kiss?

Charley.—This way, Pat—

"She puts her hands behind the pot-rack,
Takes out the tongs, and breaks your head.
With your good new pair," *&c., &c., &c.*

Charley was sitting in a state of false security on one side of the fire; Pat on the other in the recess; and while the laugh was bursting from the dozen pair of lips more or

less, Pat's wattle descended on the upper horizontal line of Charley's thigh, producing such a disagreeable shock that he involuntarily sprang up, and tumbled across the hearth. His body described a curve, bearing down in its descent Pat and his cudgel, the form, and all that sat on it. Their efforts, when laid low, to set themselves to rights once more, Charley's defeat, Pat's objurgations, and the eccentric flourishes of his cudgel, produced such roars of unreasoning merriment among the non-sufferers that anything like rational conversation was out of the question for some minutes at least.

Mrs. Roche.—Silence, every mother's son of you! It's little you deserve that Mr. Neil should be wasting his poetry on such thankless people. Maybe if it was Billy the Bowl you had, you'd pay him more respect; and he such a glutton, and never thinking of anything but cramming himself. Ah! he hasn't the decent drop in him that you have, Pat; and could no more make a song than he could fly. Dr. Ryan [the Bishop of Ferns] used to give him a penny every morning as sure as the day came; and dirty Billy managed to keep himself alive with the penny loaf, and three or four other windfalls, till dinner time. At last one Ash Wednesday the bishop went to the chapel without thinking of Billy, or leaving his penny for him. So when he came as usual, and found his patron away, and no penny to the fore, he thought the world was come to an end. After a while he considered that he might as well call to the *chapel* (Enniscorthy cathedral) and see what luck he'd have. When he hobbled there, he found the bishop putting the blessed ashes on the people's foreheads, and he sat quiet for a while, till at last he began to think that the ceremony would never come to an end. It was over at last, but Billy got no relief, for Dr. Ryan then began to preach to the congregation. No one need expect much devotion from the likes of Billy; but somehow he was cowed, and did not make any display for a while. At last his hunger got furious; he began to think that his inside would be all gone, and that he'd fall in a *stugue* on one of the big diamond-shaped flags of the floor. So, while the sermon went on and on,

and no sign of stopping, he roared out at long and at last, 'Ah, then! Dr. Ryan *achudh!* will you stop scouldin' the poor people, and come down, and give me my penny!' Some one that was nigh landed him out, giving him a penny inside the chapel to stop his throat, and a good clout when he had him on the wrong side of the building; but I promise you that the bishop never went again to the chapel, Sunday or holiday, without first providing for his pensioner.

By the time Mrs. Roche had finished her story, Pat, to whose vanity she had so cunningly administered, was in the best possible good humour; and, to requite her, he began to expatiate on the figure, strength, and bravery of her brothers in "ninety-eight." On this point our strong-armed matron was as easily led by the nose as Pat himself.

Joanna.—Pat, that old sagacious fox of a father-in-law of yours will shake salt on your tail in regard of the fortune he ought to be giving you with Miss Nancy, and if I was you, Pat, I'd keep my eyes open. Did you ever think of the fine habit-shirts, and silk mohair gowns, and *calameenca* petticoats you'll have to be buying for your grand wife; aye, and cordovan half boots, and silk stockings, and a broadcloth riding habit, and an *oyster's* feather, I think they call it, to put in her beaver hat, and a side-saddle to match; for she'll not be satisfied to sit on a pillion behind you, going to Mass or market. Then yourself will have to buy a hunter and top-boots, and I don't see how you will ever be able to coax a boot on your poor foot; and I think you will look rather *sharoose* when the buckeens of strong farmers' sons will meet you at the fairs, and force Mrs. Neil into a tent or a hotel to treat her to a bottle of claret or a tumbler of punch, and leave yourself abroad to mind the horses. Why, man, I don't think twenty pounds a year will stand such *extranity;* and maybe your proud wife cock-crowing over you at home, and cursing the day you came to court her,

'With your good new pair of what d'ye-call-ems.'

Pat.—I tell you, Miss Joanna Lacy, I wont be cowed by your insinuations. I'll make the old boy shell out the guineas before I put the ring on Miss Nancy's finger; and

if she daar cut them gaaches you speak of, I think I can handle a kippeen as well as another neighbour's child; and——

Joanna.—But, Pat, be careful about the fortune. Take a knowing blackman with you, or you'll be *gamboozled* like a cousin of mine that once went courting a farmer's daughter

'That lived convaynient to the Isle of Man.'

Oh, bother the song, I mean convenient to Ross Droit. The girl's father said he'd give her a good penny of money on her wedding-day; yes, and a couple of special good *strippers* (milch cows) over and above. Well, my fine gawm of a cousin lets himself be persuaded, and the day after the wedding, the old rogue of a father walks into the room where the young couple were discoursing of their happiness; and he opens a towel that he held in his hand, and says, '*Ru-yee* (Rory), I promised you a good penny with Mauyeen there; here is as bright and as good a penny as you will see in a kish of brogues; I laid it up this many a year, and if you can find a better pair of strippers [curved chisels for stripping off bark], than them,' says he, throwing the tools on the table, 'I'll give you lave to pull my nose before the congregation.'

Pat.—Ah, may *ould Harry* run to Lusk with him, the roguish thief of a naygur! but I wont be bited that way. I'll see the money counted and safe in my pocket before I say a word of the marriage ceremony.

Joanna.—But, now in earnest, Pat, wouldn't it be better to take some poor neighbour's child, such as myself, that wouldn't be above dressing your foot, and working for you, even supposing you were to buy a sh——. I mean a woman's shirt for me.

Pat.—I'm obleeged to you, Joanna, for your decent proposal; but I must have one week of *launa-vauya*, and plenty of money for it. I'll sit in Mrs. Hand's parlour, and treat every man, woman, and child that goes by for a whole week; and we'll have a bonfire, and a big barrel of beer on two big stones; and wont they cry out, '*Hurraw* for Pat Neil!' And when my first wife dies, Joanna, and I'll have lashins of money, maybe I wont remember somebody

that didn't think themselves too good for me when I was poor.

Joanna.—Indeed, Mr. Neil, I never said a worse word of you behind your back than that you were a quiet, decent boy when you were asleep.

The evening's business having happily reached this point, Mrs. Roche suggested that they should endeavour to make up for the want of harmony felt during the last two or three hours. "Charley," said she, "in punishment for your interruption of Mr. Neil's melody, I lay my injunction on you to sing the best song in your collection."

"I was only waiting for the wind of the word, ma'am," said he. "I'll sing you a song which I think has come to us from England with other things—some better and some worse. I learned it from a servant boy that was born under the hill of Camross, between Clonroche and Taghmon. It has a very fine air if I could only master it. You may call it

"THE REJECTED LOVER.

"The wheat and the rye they are turned out of shoot,
The blackbirds and thrushes are changing their notes,
The fields and the meadows have got a green coat,
And love is the cause of my folly.

"The week before Easter the moon did shine low,
And I to my false love a courting did go,
Where the young men and maidens did make a great show
About me and my false-hearted lover.

"When I saw my love as she sat at the meat,
I sat down beside her but nothing could eat;
I loved her sweet company better than meat,
But since she has wed with another.

"When I saw my love and she dressed all in white,
She looked like an angel—she dazzled my sight;
I took up my hat and I wished her good night,
And adieu to the false-hearted lady.

"The next time I saw my love in the church stand,
The ring on her finger, her love by the hand,
And now she's got mistress of houses and lands,
And adieu to my false one for ever.

"The last time I saw my love in the church bow,
Her bridesmaids around her, they made a great show;
I kissed her soft hand, though my heart it was low,
And after fell into a fever.

"And now dig my grave both long, wide, and deep,
A stone at my head, and a sod at my feet,
And there lay me down to take my last sleep,
And adieu to my darling for ever!"

Charley then laid his commands on Joanna, who sang the following piece, and her sweet voice was in this instance well aided by a charmingly plaintive air. The ballad is of an abrupt character, which we have made no attempt to soften.

"MOLLY BAWN.

"Come all you young fellows that follow the gun,
Beware of late shooting at the set of the sun.
With her white apron round her she looked like a fawn,
But alas to my grief, 'twas my own Molly Bawn!

"He ran to his uncle with the gun in his hand,
Saying, 'Uncle, dear uncle, I scarcely can stand;
My curse on you, Tony, that lent me your gun,
To go a late shooting at the set o' the sun!

"'I've a story to tell you which happened of late;
I loved Molly Bawn, and her beauty was great,
But I've shot my true lover,—alas, I'm undone,
While she sat in the shade at the set of the sun.

"'I rubbed her fair temples, and found she was dead,
And a fountain of tears for my darling I shed,
A fountain of tears there I wept bitterly,—
So soon to be married to my darling Molly!

"'And now I'll be forced by the laws of the land,
For killing my darling, my trial to stand.
Oh! sad was the hour when I aimed at the fawn,
And I'll mourn till I die for my dear Molly Bawn.'"

The company were silent for some time after Joanna had ceased, for they were really enthralled in some degree by the sentiment of the ballad, and by the fine air and the voice which had made the most of it. Indeed, the poor songstress herself was in tears at the conclusion, so that

to conceal her emotion she made an unsuccessful attempt at a laugh, and called on Bryan, who sang the egregious ditty of the *Red-Haired Man's Wife*, with which we shall not trouble our readers.

When Pat, and Bet, and Shān were shown to their beds in the stable-loft and the barn, greater room was made about the big hearth, and with the diminishing of the company the conversation assumed a more serious character.

"How little relish," said Mr. Roche, "could we have for an evening's relaxation like this, and what faint hopes we would have for the future well-being of our children, if those under whom we live were of the class who throw away money like slates, to cut a figure among the great people in London, or indulge in vicious courses. When such people are pinched, they must urge their agents to squeeze money out of the tenants; and we would be obliged to work like slaves, half starve ourselves, wear bad clothing, and all merely for leave to live and toil to enable our tyrants to make a laughing-stock of themselves before their grand foreign acquaintance."

The conversation wandered from one subject to another till it came to a comparison of the respective merits of Catholic and Protestant landlords; country people, like some city folk, being rather addicted to draw general conclusions from individual facts. At this point Charley remarked:—"Talking of Protestants and Catholics, you'll pardon me when I say that when a Catholic is bad he is the very devil himself, and if he happens to be landlord or agent, God help the tenants! My people once lived on the estate of a gentleman who employed as agent the representative of one of our old Anglo-Norman families, who was himself a Catholic in profession. Oh, dear! himself and his son and daughter—how well they understood the science of extracting duty fowl, duty eggs, duty days, duty everything from the wretches over whom they tyrannised; and how well bound and gilt were their prayer books on Sundays! All these fine things, however, can't keep the breath in a man when his day arrives. The head of the family died; and the owner of the estate still thought all was right, as he had heard of no ejectments or

complaints of any kind. It would be a ticklish thing to complain of an agent who understood the principle of the screw so well. Still, as the landlord laboured under the impression that he had received very little from that part of his estate for a long time, he asked to see the late agent's accounts; but whether it was owing to a want of understanding between the son and daughter of the late agent, or to an incorrect way of keeping the books, or the non-production of some of them, or the gentleman's want of practice, or a mixture of these causes, he came out of the examination more confused than when he began it. At length he got a bright idea. Taking his son along with him, and installing himself in his late agent's office-chair, he summoned the tenants to meet him there and then. 'Darby Toole,' said he, 'you have paid no rent for seven years: do you call that a mark of industry or honesty?' 'Please your honour, I don't owe a farthing but the gale due last March.' 'Show me your receipts, Darby.' 'Here is all I have to shew, please your honour;'—and his honour is occupied for fifteen minutes in examining pencil memorandums and remarks which do not bear out Darby's assertion by any means, nor are marked with a government stamp in any instance. Other perplexed individuals succeeded to Darby, and all gave most circumstantial evidence of punctuality in handing over the money without getting the ordinary acknowledgment in exchange.

"After getting a splitting headache from this unaccustomed labour, and after *not* getting the least insight into the real state of matters between himself and his tenants, he and his heir walked home and took their dinner. When it was over, and he found himself, if not more enlightened, at least more disposed to look at disagreeable things with an unruffled mind, he thus addressed his son:—'It is of no use, I see, to disturb ourselves farther in this business. The probability is, that the rents have been paid with some degree of punctuality, and it is too late now to begin to act the tyrant. We are not accustomed to the part, and would perform it badly, and get no applause from the spectators. Give every one of these people, except the notoriously lazy or careless, a receipt for the half

year ending in March last, and then we will commence anew. This is a good lesson for your future guidance in the relation between your agent and yourself. I am sure that you will never remove from the estate a worthy industrious family; and if you are plagued with a vicious or idle one, purchase their departure at any price. Above all, be your own agent, at least until you get a thoroughly honest, judicious, and considerate man to fill the office.' "

During these days of hurry and evenings of relaxation Tom and his brisk partner joked and sparred as usual. On his hinting that it would be just the right thing for themselves to get married on the same day with their young master and mistress, Joanna put a very decided veto on the motion. She said it would be quite time enough when they could get a few acres of land, and a cow and some sheep; that he must continue to lay up as fast as he could, for fear that if he turned out lazy she might be tempted to throw him aside for some little budget of a farmer that would have the land, and the stock, and so forth.

CHAPTER XLII.

AT LAST!

THE morning of the eventful day saw few loiterers in bed. Whatever care had been already taken to have parlour, kitchen, bed-rooms, and bawn in neat order, night had intervened, and brought dust and displacement in its company; and new cares were needed to put a new face on things, as even the most cleanly and precise person must occasionally wash his face and hands. One of Joanna's chief cares was to get the breakfast for herself and the labourers. This consisted of stirabout and milk—an entertainment simple in preparation, but liable to be spoiled by unskilful hands. A pot proportioned to the number of expectant mouths being three-fourths filled with water, was set over the turf fire until it came to the boil. Then Joanna, dipping her fat, well-formed hand into a wooden or delft dish full of oatmeal, and a modicum of salt, let it

spill gently through her fingers into the boiling water, stirring the mass with the potstick, a model of clean white wood. She continued to let fall fistful after fistful, and to stir the mass vigorously till all was uniformly blended. Lovers of this particular eatable would sit and look with pleasure, as thick-skinned bubbles perpetually rose and burst with a hushed noise. Joanna would leave the fire-side for half a minute or so, to put a needful hand to one thing or another, and then return to the fire, and give an additional stir. The exact moment of projection being arrived, known only to housekeepers worthy of the name, one of the men lifted off the pot, and the boiling and steaming stirabout was poured into sundry dishes and plates arranged in symmetrical order on the kitchen table.

Now, had Joanna put in her meal while the water was still cool, or had she not attended to the needful agitation, she and her fellow consumers would have had to breakfast on a composition resembling either tough paste or freestone. But, treated as it had been by her skilful hands, it was a most palatable and wholesome breakfast for those who, with pewter or iron spoons, and noggins filled with good milk, began to assail it when it was cooled down to the proper point.

A certain etiquette was evident among the feasters. He or she who either was, or wished to be thought polite at the breakfast-table, did not use his spoon in peeling the colder skin from off the surface. No, no: he made a small insertion in the edge next to him, and went on temperately enlarging the breach "till thirst and hunger ceased."

There was no time allowed this morning for dawdling over the breakfast table. As Father Furlong was expected at ten o'clock to perform the binding ceremony of matrimony, all appearance of eating and drinking was soon removed. The cows and horses were led or driven out to their pastures, but no labour was done on the farm more than absolute need required.

Neighbours began to drop into the bawn by twos and threes, Mr. and Mrs. Roche among the number, dressed in their Sunday's best, the lady wearing a pair of mittens, and

the gentleman a pair of steel buckles at the knees of his smallclothes, thus setting off his home-made grey woollen stockings and his dark corduroys. There was still no appearance of the bridegroom, but no one expected him so early. The neighbouring farmers' wives, as they dropped in, turned into the parlour, or contented themselves with a seat on the settle in the kitchen, or some of the other hard seats, and chatted with Mrs. O'Brien as she superintended the baking of thick wheat cakes on the huge griddle. A few young friends of the bride were admitted to her bower. It is probable that they were of some service there in the way of advice and encouragement to their sister on the subject of the perilous voyage she was just undertaking, and which they hoped or feared should be tried by themselves some day. However, this is only a conjecture, as no one dared even approach the door but Mrs. O'Brien herself.

Here was the goal just won for which Theresa had wished and sighed, and was she happy? She was flushed and nervous, and had not leisure to answer the question. She looked on her bridemaids perhaps as so many priestesses, with their garlands, and their salt, and their meal, to hang round her neck, and throw upon her head, and herself as the victim destined for the forthcoming sacrifice! How could she endure the eyes of so many people intent upon her while a prey to such anxious emotion! Then the notion of a change in her domestic life, from her mere lieutenancy under her mother's rule to the management of a large farm-house and its appurtenances! Oh, if all could be broken off or deferred for a year or two! But she soon banished these unwelcome thoughts, and the very idea of her tried, truthful lover having gone away, or being sick or dead, brought back the full consciousness of her love. She bethought how much he and she had endured that this day might arrive; she nerved herself for the trial, but anxiously wished that a day or two of her life were passed over, and that she and her husband were walking quietly together in the paddock.

Word was now brought by the happy and anxious

mother that the priest had been just seen coming down th road, and so while the interior of the house was tolerably free from the presence of men they left the room—Mrs. O'Brien kissing her daughter affectionately, and leading the way through the kitchen. On entering the parlour, they found the table covered with a snow-white cloth, and gay with its cups, saucers, teapot, &c. The chairs were arranged by the wall, and the half dozen young girls took their seats, and in a flutter of expectation strove to give courage to Theresa, all the while examining the dresses of each other, for fear of any defect or negligence being apparent to the common enemy. Mr. O'Brien and his son, who had made his appearance the day before with a careworn expression of face, had been all this time employed receiving their neighbours, and their neighbours' compliments; the conversation straying from the subject in hand to the prospect of the crops, and the price of cattle; and the attention of the younger fellows occasionally distracted by the mention of dances, fairs, and sweethearts.

The conference was interrupted by the apparition of Father Furlong riding down the road. Hats were raised, and salutations made as he rode into the yard and dismounted, and very lucky it was that Pat Neil was by to take charge of the tricksy animal who had already begun to lay down her ears at the sight of unknown faces.

The priest shook hands cordially with the chief personages, including Bryan and his aide-de-camp, Charley Redmond. These were asked by a comic guest, whether they had dropped from the big ash that overshadowed the bawn gate, or had stolen out of the cowhouse, for no one had been aware of their presence a minute before. After some disjointed remarks and rejoinders, Father James made a motion that they might as well set about the business that had brought them all there, and he led the way to the door. He was divested of his hat and great coat in the sort of hall, and was cordially welcomed by the good matron of the household. He then entered the parlour with his convoy in his wake, and smilingly shook

hands with the bride and her damsels, who were as fine a sight as could be presented by youth and rustic beauty, and unsullied white silk and muslin.

Theresa and her bridemaids had their black, brown, or golden hair wound at the back of the head, just as Minerva or Venus had hers, with the addition of a tortoise-shell comb to keep the gordian-knot firm. All the young girls were well looking; but none could be said to seem at ease in the presence of priest and people. Though the bride was suffering from the embarrassment natural to her situation, she showed none of that shyness arising from overweening self-esteem which is so unpleasant to witness. She was endowed with a pleasing manner, partly natural and partly acquired, and did not cause any one in company to be pained by her embarrassment.

In those far-removed times and remote corners, nothing resembling the publication of banns had been dreamed of. Bryan and Theresa had been at confession and communion the previous Sunday, and all the questions now proposed by the priest as to the existence of impediments were made as matter of form. Father Furlong did not allow sufficient time for an air of restraint to envelop his company. The candles were soon lighted, and he himself with his stole thrown over his head, and the ends hanging before him, stood opposite Bryan and Theresa, who, standing side by side, and flanked by bridesman and bridesmaids, and fathers and mothers, were now prepared for those questions and answers, and blessings, which were to secure them to each other for life. At this point Theresa was surprised to find herself so courageous and self-possessed; she felt only an agreeable sensation of awe. The near presence of the one to whom she had been so long attached, and who had given such strong proofs of devoted attachment to herself, seemed to have infused a strange calm and strength. She gave her troth, and received his, and found her finger encircled by a ring which Bryan had so anxiously fitted beforehand to her taper finger, and the outspoken part of the function being over, all knelt in silent prayer; and at the conclusion Father Furlong bade Bryan kiss his wife,

an order which he obeyed at the moment, lest Charley, or any other young fellow, should anticipate him.

Having been, during a period of our country experience, an assistant at many rustic weddings, we have witnessed some trifling irregularities, which, if we were merely describing things as they ought to be, we would suppress. We have seen one rogue, as soon as the permission was given, pulling the bridegroom back, and his confederate giving the first salute to the angry bride, and the company very slightly sympathising in the mortification of the newly-married man. However, one triumph of poetical justice must not be omitted. Tarquin the First had planted himself on one side of the bride; Tarquin the Second, on the other side of the bridegroom; at the signal, each made a charge sideways; but Pat, skilfully and swiftly drawing Peggy back, the Tarquins First and Second merely knocked their foreheads against each other, so that the concussion was fearful to witness. Now Redmond was audacious enough for anything, but he was aware of Bryan's tremendous strength, and besides he had previously threatened to half murder him if he was not a good boy.

After that little crowning act, and when all got to their feet, there was great shaking of hands, and many good wishes were offered for the happiness of the young couple. In a novel, the bride would be in and out of the arms of the seniors, and much kissing and weeping would be endured, and perhaps one or two of the bridesmaids be mistaken for the bride in the confusion; but Irish countryfolk, if a little more liberal in displaying their emotions than English of the same rank, present no such scenes as are witnessed on the Continent and in our own theatres, when the tender emotions of the common people or their representatives are excited.

But now the genial bustle began for breakfast. Piles of hot griddle-baked wheaten cakes, and wheaten loaves baked in a pot with coals laid on the lid, and all well buttered inside, barn-bracks, and other varieties of the staff of life, were handed round on plates to the score of favoured guests that had possession of the parlour. Redmond made himself useful; so did young O'Brien; so did a couple of

the bridesmaids, donning aprons for the occasion; but Joanna was the fat Hebe in chief who diffused gaiety and smiles among the guests. Bryan was graciously permitted to sit next his bride. Father Furlong laughed at any good local jest that was born of the occasion, and contributed a few himself. One or two of the younger portion of the company afterwards acknowledged that when they got somewhat rid of their shyness, it all appeared like the garden of Eden.

Among the assembled friends were good-natured Peggy Kavanagh, and the no less good-natured Tom Quigly, and his very conscientious and respectable but self-complacent brother Jem; likewise Dr. Kelly. Even Billy Droughan was a welcome guest in the kitchen; and he and Tom looked rather foolish at each other for a moment after their nervous shake-hands; but there was neither time nor place for indulging remorse. All was cheerfulness round them, and their negligence had not had that evil result it might have produced, if worldly things were at the disposal of mere chance. Had we our own will, we would devote about a hundred pages to all the rustic wit, and wisdom, and drollery, and absurdity that took place. But the marriage so happily brought about has satisfied the well-minded reader, and the pages would not be read, and the future fortunes of Edward could not be brought into so small a compass as can now be afforded. So we leave the hundred wise, and witty, and jocular sayings unreported, and proceed to wind up our narrative.

At last the breakfast was over, and the tea equipage removed, and conversation, both general and in groups, proceeded, while Mrs. O'Brien produced the bride-cake lately arrived from the oven of an Enniscorthy artist, and some decanters of port and sherry. Oh! Bacchus and Aglae! Some young boy and girl will now taste wine for the first time, and every girl will carry home a piece of the bride-cake to inspire her dreams the ensuing night, as it lies under her pillow wrapped in its silver paper. So the priest sliced away, and the glasses were filled, and the healths of the newly-married couple were proposed by the priest, and a tiresome piece of ceremony was inflicted by

one or other of the older guests, who, not content with addressing Father Furlong and the heads of the two houses, and the young couple, would bow to every one at the table. Ah, what would not "Sir Epicure Mammon" give to find the same flavour of ambrosia and nectar in his cake and wine, which our young friends found in theirs that day?

It is not to be supposed that Joanna, and Tom Sweetman, and their fellows were passed over. They likewise got their glass of wine and their piece of bride-cake, and they drank to the happiness of their young master and mistress from the bottom of their souls, and all except Joanna returned to the kitchen rejoicing.

It may be objected by the learned in this kind of lore, that the family breakfast in parlour and kitchen should have been taken before the marriage; and that after the ceremony, which usually occurred about noon, nothing was introduced but the cake and the wine. Be it so: we grant that such a state of things might have prevailed in their locality. Let them be convinced that what is here set down is founded on fact.

But the clergyman has other parochial duties of a less pleasant nature to discharge, and he shakes hands all round, repeats his blessing over Bryan and Theresa, and receives his horse from the hands of Pat Neil, who is not the least happy of the company collected that day. The bridegroom and bride, accompanied by young O'Brien, Charles Redmond, and a couple of other young friends—say Mr. Gyas and Mr. Cloanthus, and the happy white-arrayed maidens—are permitted to take a walk through paddocks and pastures, and along the paths near fences. And Bryan has Theresa to himself, and Theresa has Bryan to herself, and the rest, walking in twos and threes, have tact enough not to interrupt the interesting subject on which they are employed, except when stiles and other accidents of the promenade intervene.

But how shall we in suitable strains recount the labours of the matron, of Joanna, and the other assistants in getting the mighty dinner prepared by half-past two o'clock? Yet so it was. At the large kitchen fire, and at another in an

out-house, were boiled mighty masses of bacon and white cabbage of such quality as a Dublin or London citizen may perhaps taste once in a lifetime, quarters of beef, and legs of mutton; and before the roaring turf-fires (shall we ever sit at a genuine turf-fire again?) were roasted fowl and ribs of beef, whilst potsfull of potatoes—the wholesome, palatable potato—were not forgotten.

At the appointed hour named, about a score of people were once more occupying the parlour; and Mrs. Roche and Mrs. O'Brien carved vigorously at the heads of the two tables, and Redmond and the bridegroom did their duty at the other ends, and every one was helped rather too plentifully; and what with the number of people collected, and the steam arising from the hot viands, we should be far from wishing a chair at the hospitable board, were it not for the open front windows, and the available draughts of excellent home-brewed beer that was plentifully supplied from japanned can or jug of earthenware. Besides, the room was reasonably long and wide, and the ceiling was not very low.

There was good cheer in the kitchen. Joanna expected as much happiness when the faithful Tom Sweetman should be her sworn slave, as she now wished her kind young mistress. Tom, being guest, was royally treated, and great enjoyment ruled the big dinner-table. Some beggars, and the half-witted strollers known to the readers, were happy in their way in an outhouse, the kitchen being for the moment too crowded to receive them; but Pat Neil had the privilege of the chimney-corner, nor did he show himself unworthy of the favour. Many a laugh did he excite among the feasters by his peculiar notions on housekeeping, on the moral virtues, and the general fitness of things. "No Christian," he observed, "should be without meat in his house at Christmas, and Easter, and *Sraft* (Shrove-tide), and St. Martin's night;" and then he illustrated the precept by the example given on the evening of the conspiracy in Back-lane. Joanna being released from her duties in the parlour for a moment, observed to him, "Pat, I'm sure you were at many weddings at poor Father James's."

"Indeed I was, and often I got ashamed of some o' the young women—they're impedenter sometimes nor the men."

"They'd need it now and then," said Joanna. "I was at Mark Gorman's wedding, and if the woman was half the *onshuch* that he was the *omadhawn*, they'd never be man and wife. Says the priest, 'Mark, you'll repeat the words after me.' 'I will, sir,' says Mark. This was in Father M.'s own parlour, and all the neighbours standing by. Then says the priest, 'Will you, Mark Gorman, take this woman,' mentioning her name, 'for your lawful wife?' and the answer he got was, 'Will you, Mark Gorman, take this woman, so-and-so.' 'But,' says the priest, 'you're not to repeat the questions.' Says Mark, 'You're not to repeat the questions.' Well, this time Father M. was a little vexed, and says he, 'Upon my word, Mark, you're no better than an ass,' and poor Mark said the very same words after him. I declare to you I don't know how they got him at last to make the right answer, but I know it would be well for the barony of Bantry if all the witty fellows in it were as quiet, and honest, and pious as poor Mark, for all that."

When the feast was over, the youthful folk renewed their happy promenade, in the course of which it may be guessed that some future solemnity had its origin. The seniors contented themselves with shorter excursions, and Mrs. O'Brien took the opportunity of their absence to let a thorough current of air through kitchen and parlour, which were now cleared of the relics of the dinner.

Before all had returned in the evening, some to whom the sound of fiddles and dancing feet was rapture, had readied up the barn, getting any odd sheaves up into a corner, and fitting candles into cleft sticks and other miscellaneous contrivances fixed pretty high in the wall. Some few chairs and stools were arranged near one end for the elder people, and blind Neddy Martin the fiddler, and a piper whose name has escaped us. At the proper time these worthies got their tea in the kitchen with Joanna, Tom Sweetman, and the other inmates, and in the parlour were seated the bridal party, who were similarly engaged,

every one mercilessly quizzing the bridegroom if he was not alert in waiting on the bride and the bridesmaids.

When tea was over, and the contents of a mighty jug of punch brewed by the hands of Mrs. O'Brien began to circulate, there was much pleasant talk set afloat, and many healths drunk (the Castleboro family not being neglected), and many wishes were fervently uttered for the future happiness and health of Bryan and his bride. The conversation being on topics exclusively local, it is not considered expedient to reproduce it here. We must also omit several standing jokes, which, though they set those present on the grin, would probably be deemed very melancholy mirth by our readers, as they would require much previous instruction to be able to discover their points. Some time being thus spent, and several smart hits given by the bridesmaids to the bachelors, in return for compliments, some of which were tinged with a slight infusion of irony, Charley was directed by Mrs. Roche to give the company a verse or two. He accordingly sang the "Hay-making," one of those lays of which there were rather more current through our provinces than strict morality would approve—woman's credulity and man's fickleness forming the theme. We will submit Charley's specimen, as it happens to be the least objectionable of many that we have had the ill-luck to hear:—

"THE HAY-MAKING.

"'Twas in the merry month of May,
When hay it was a-making;
And harvest time being coming on,
The girls were fond of raking.

* * * * *

Among the assembly at this rural occupation were a young lady and gentleman no wiser than they should be.

"When six weeks were past and gone,
This maid she was a sighing;
And when six more were at an end,
This maid she was a crying.

She wrote a letter to her love—
Her only joy and turtle-dove,
To see if he would constant prove,
And ease her of her weeping.
Chorus (a mile long).

"He took this letter in his hand,
He read it o'er and over;
He took the letter in his hand,
And back he wrote another.
He wrote a letter back again,
That it might ease her of her pain:—
'Your magic arts I do disdain—
I'll merrily play the rover.'
Chorus (same length).

"'I have as good a pair of shoes
As ever was made of leather;
I'll cock my beaver up behind,
I'll face the stormy weather.'

Here an interval of a year may be supposed to occur.

"'Now since that I have run my race,
And cannot find a better place,
I'll turn home to your sweet face—
We'll live and die together.'"
Chorus (no shorter).

Under privilege of a call, Charley summoned one of the bridesmaids, who gave the "Dear Irish Boy," commenting on which, we could wish the style less inflated. We urge the reader to find the music, which was published some time about 1809, as sung by Miss Mountain at the Theatre, Crow-street. Intensely hating as we do the kill-time performance of orchestras when there is a "delay of the house," we could listen to the air of this song for a long summer day, even as the heroine did to the voice of—

"THE DEAR IRISH BOY.

"Oh, my Connor! his cheeks are as ruddy as morning,
The brightest of pearls do but mimic his teeth,
While nature with ringlets his mild brows adorning,
His hair Cupid's bow-strings, and roses his breath.
Smiling, beguiling, cheering, endearing,
Together oft over the mountains we've strayed,
With each other delighted and fondly united,
I could listen all day to my dear Irish boy.

"No roebuck more swiftly could fly o'er the mountain,
No veteran bolder meet dangers and scars;
He's sightly, he's sprightly, he's clear as the fountain,
His eyes sparkle love—oh! he's gone to the wars.
Smiling, beguiling, &c.

"The wars being now over, and he not returning,
I fear me that some hidden plot has been laid,
Or that some cruel goddess has him captivated,
And left here to mourn his dear Irish maid.
Smiling," *&c.*

Another young fellow, being laid under *geasa*, gave a precious lay, Irish and English alternately. It is to be hoped that the native construction was superior to the version here given of—

"THE SHANDUINE (OLD MAN).

"I long loved my Molly, she lived in this parish;
Her friends they consented we married should be,
But a doting old miser, whom age did long harass,
Because he had riches would have her from me.

* * * * * *

"If you'd see the hobble and squabble I then was in,
He thrashing my body, and at him I dare not grin;
The brats o' the village they gathered about me,
And sore were my bones for his sad jealousy.

* * * * * *

"The women soon came, and the stones flew heartily,
If you'd see the bailiff how rough he did handle me!
Such pulling and dragging and scratching of faces!
The rogues they were beaten—we went to drink punch.

"To Cork I did go, and joyous did sport,
In Cloyne it's well known I often have been,
In Youghal, Dungarvan, and Carrick also—
In Kilkenny my foe lived with his Mauyeen.
I soon found her out, but the old rogue he tatthered me;
He gave me the rout, and soundly did wattle me;
For grief o' me coming, he died with vexation—
For joy in the morning I gave her a kiss.

"But when in good order the corpse was laid out,
The women all round began for to cry;
Some rhymed out in Irish while others did shout,
But divil a tear there dropped from an eye.

How he'd plough, an' he'd sow, an' he'd cut turf with many men—
He'd reap, an' he'd mow, till gardens, or do anything;
And in the due season bring home the pitaytees,
But never was fav'rite with woman or maid."

Here Tom Sweetman and Joanna were brought up from the kitchen, and made to sit down, take their glass, and be at their ease (?). This they soon were—Joanna at least. Being invited to the musical strife by her young master, she gave in her fine voice *Bannow's Banks*, which is not here produced, as it may be easily found elsewhere. Tom had not a spice of humour in him—his body was too large; so he gave the transcendental

"MAID OF SKREEN.

"There was a lad who loved a lass,
Her dwelling was near Skreen;
Fair Flora in her beauty
Could not equal this fair dame.
'This lovely maid has me ensnared,
And stole my tender heart,
By which indeed my veins do bleed;
I'm burning with love-sick dart.

"'When I'm alone I sigh and moan,
And thus I often said—
I'd conquer men or *rifle* (rival ?) swains,
To gain this lovely maid.
I'd cross the deep without a ship
(The mermaid would be my friend),
By land or say I'll spend my days
Without the laste content.

"'O! fairest of all womankind
That e'er my eyes did see,
Take pity on your own true love,
Prove kind, and marry me.
On mossy banks and purling streams,
I'll wander and I'll rove,
Still raving and complaining
For the loss of my true love.'

"But when she heard the moans he made,"

* * * * * *

She made answer. But we are ill pleased with her after

conduct, so unworthy of the idea entertained by her swain, and will here drop her acquaintance.

The damsel next enlisted sang the "Royal Blackbird," an incorrect copy of which is accessible in some modern collections. We intend to give it according to the genuine old ballad style (eight pages 12mo, price one penny), some day. Bryan, collecting his spirits, when his turn arrived, rattled out—

"BILLY O'ROURKE.

"I cut my stick an' grazed my brogues
In the latter end of May, sir,
And down to Dublin town I came,
To cut the corn and hay, sir.
I paid the captain eight thirteens
To carry me over to Parkgate;
And before the ship was half the way
She went at a terrible hard gate.
With my gilla ma chrue, and my heart so true,
And Billy O'Rourke's the bouchal.

"The captain he said, 'To the bottom we'll go,'
But I said, 'I don't care a farden—
You promised to carry me to Parkgate,
And I'll make you stick to your bargain.'
Some fell upon their bended knees,
The ladies all were fainting,
But I sat down my bread and cheese—
I always minded the main thing."
Chorus (as before).

We shall not proceed further with this selfish specimen of a Paddy, nor enlarge on the good fortunes of that other Billy, who thus boasted so impudently of his schooldays:

"Och mavrone, how the girls got fond of me!
My face on their samplers the crathurs would work;
For mending their thumbstalls and writing their copies,
They all found convaynience in Billy O'Rourke."

Billy's star was in the ascendant not only among the pupils; the very spouse of the schoolmaster was enthralled:

"And it's often she'd cry if oul' baywig would die,
She'd soon make a master of Billy O'Rourke."

There must have been a selfish, gluttonous original for these two Billies, for we find O'Keeffe's Billy imbued with

the same unamiable disposition. But if any other melodies were executed that night, they must remain unchronicled just now.

At this time of the evening, as happened at the Wedding of Ballyporeen, a motion was made that all should migrate to the barn, and begin dancing under patronage of Neddy Martin and his colleague. So parlour and kitchen were soon empty; Mrs. O'Brien and an old woman remaining behind to look after the house.

And now, with reference to our musicians, let our readers discharge from their minds the image of one of our city minstrels crawling along with a hungry face and in seedy garments; and look on Neddy's new hat, clean shirt, clean stockings, good shoes, blue coat, with shining brass buttons, and pock-marked ruddy countenance. He is easy in his circumstances, never refuses a decent collection, but never fishes for one. He is partial to a drop of drink; as there are few fiddlers born with a dislike to it; and while the barn was being readied up, and the candles lighted and fastened to the walls, he had taken a glass of his favourite whiskey. The music will not be the worse for it, and the dancers' feet will go the livelier.

By the time Neddy was elevated on his wooden throne, there were as many candidates present as the floor could accommodate, several unbidden guests having arrived, and there was no room for any thing greater than a four-hand reel. So all faces being kindled up with a lively interest, and all feet quivering for action, and Neddy occupied with rosining and tuning, Charley and Bryan made their best bows to Mrs. Roche and Theresa. A lively air was struck up by the two musicians, they took hands round, then retraced the figure, then crossed hands, and after a couple of simple evolutions found themselves each opposite his own partner. The music quickened, the dancers lost their shyness, their feet went in lively and exact time to the music, the men cracked their fingers, the women, with hand on side or gown-skirt held out, humoured the tune with head and feet; each seized his partner by the two hands, and round they whirled. Bryan exhorted Charley not to be the death of his mother, Charley recommended

Bryan to mind his own business, and laughing and cheering rose on all sides. "That's it, Mrs. Roche: you're worth two daughter-in-laws yet. Now, Charley, your soul, cut out the bridegroom; he's after selling the pass on us."

When the excitement was at its height, Mrs. Roche, giving something between a scream and a laugh, seized on the hands of the two men, and put an end to the dance. Each performer saluted his or her partner with best bow or curtsy; then taking hands and facing Neddy they saluted him; and the ladies being conducted to seats of honour near the fiddler, the act was concluded. Congratulations poured in on Mrs. Roche, who received them as graciously as she could while striving to recover her breath.

The two men now made their bows to Joanna and another candidate, and the former operation was renewed; the chief merit of the performance consisting in the rapid and well-timed motions of the feet, the height of the occasional springs and kicks on the part of the men, the lively appearance and disappearance of the young women's pumps, and the vigorous style in which the floor was beaten. Very careful were the performers in keeping time; for the fiddler, as soon as a false beat fell on his ear, would call by name on the awkward performer, and criticise his or her steps in a very candid and uncomplimentary style. Agile, joyous, and skilful must the young dancer be whose spirits and movements are so truly in unison with a merry rapid Irish jig, as to make all the motions of the body and the sparkling music of the instrument seem the production of a single brain and will. Joanna and the other damsel selected their partners for the next dance. After sundry repetitions of reels, jigs by a single pair were selected; and how the rapid and justly-timed steps coincided so well with the mad notes of the instruments is more than we will attempt to explain.

The two staid old farmers had not joined the joyous young group at the outset; but they were not so unmindful of their youthful experiences as to despise or dislike the amusements going forward. They were talking seriously

but pleasantly over the settlement of the young couple, when who should appear before the door but the young gentleman of the castle and his two sisters, who had extended their evening walk so far in order to honour the festival of their respected tenants.

Their appearance at the barn-door brought the sitters to their legs; the blushes, and bows, and curtsies were abundant; and the dancers, executing their obeisances as well as attention to the steps permitted, flourished away after a momentary pause more vigorously than ever. Chairs were vacated, and the jig coming to a premature close, Bryan and Edward, stepping out before the two ladies, begged the honour of their hands for a reel. No second request was needed: up they rose, and went through the exercise, if not with the activity of Theresa and Joanna, at all events with a grace and ease which charmed the most stupid pair of eyes in the room. They felt it not in the slightest degree derogatory to go through the dance with the two young men, who, if their social rank was lower, possessed the gifts of rectitude, good manners, purity of conscience, and exemption from the debasing qualities represented by the abused term "vulgarity."

The young gentleman went through the next reel with Theresa for partner; and then, after some pleasant conversation with sundry of the company, including the minstrel himself, and wishing Bryan and his betrothed every happiness, they took their leave, carrying with them the hearts of all that were left behind. Mr. Roche and Mr. O'Brien accompanied them a part of the way, and it is probable that the future prospects of our young people were discussed to some purpose during the walk.

The drawback on all worldly enjoyments is that they are of short duration, or, if continued beyond a certain time, they cease to be enjoyments. Some of the guests left earlier, some later, but all were seized on as they passed the kitchen to take a hot glass of punch to save them from getting cold. It was afterwards found out that the well-omened stocking had struck Joanna on the nose. There must be a virtue in the ceremony, for she enjoyed the title of Mrs. Sweetman before a twelvemonth had slipped by.

And now, whatever may be the reader's feeling, the writer has arrived at the end of this wedding entertainment with regret, as it arouses him from his waking dream of old-fashioned, kindly, and hospitable people, his once friends and well-wishers, and of long-vanished happy years spent by the banks of the river which has afforded a title to his modest little volume.

THE END.

NOTES.

The Shanduine, p. 47.

THIS worldly and unedifying song was versified from a literal translation of the Irish version by the writer's obliging Wexford friend who chooses to call himself *Aodh Beag* (Little Hugh). All the songs, ballads, and poetical scraps in the volume are from oral sources, some the composition of nameless native poets, others, the mere ruins of lays introduced long since by English settlers. The compiler's contributions, which he sincerely hopes may not be recognised, amount to about a dozen lines.

Bloody Bridge, p. 81.

This structure gets its name, if tradition can be depended on, from a fight between the garrison of Enniscorthy and a party headed by the renowned Daniel Jourdan, one of Sarsfield's troopers. Jourdan's men being victorious, were on the point of setting the town on fire, but were dissuaded by the Catholic Bishop of Ferns.

Patriarchs, p. 117.

A mistake for *Patriots*. If the indulgent reader detects a slight anachronism at this portion of the story, it is scarcely worth his while to proclaim it at the corners of the streets.

Bells, p. 119.

Tufts of bristly hair of a conical shape, which may be still seen on individuals of that breed of swine to which the poor animal in the lamentation belonged.

Chopped furze, p. 152.

Green furze bushes are gathered by small landholders when fresh grass or hay is not abundant. These being pressed into a long

wooden trough, are wrought on by two sharp steel blades set at right angles with each other in the head of a wooden mallet. Being chopped fine, and the thorns thus got rid of, the mess is considered palatable by the hard worked horses. Sometimes the operation is performed by an iron-studded mallet in a stone trough.

St. Martin's Day, p. 161.

A Wexford legend says that on one recurrence of this festival, November 11, the people in all the boats plying about the Wexford line of coast were warned, by an apparition of the Saint pacing along the waves, to betake themselves to the harbours. All who neglected the advice perished in a storm that ensued the same afternoon. In our youth, no Wexford boat would put to sea on that Saint's festival, no miller would set his wheel a-going, no housewife would yoke her spinning wheel. Occasionally, when a goat or sheep was ill, and seemed likely to die, its ear was slit, and itself devoted to St. Martin. If it recovered, it was killed and eaten on some subsequent 11th of November. It would not be sold in the interim for ten times its value.

Pat Neil's Leap, p. 162.

The conferences reported as having taken place among Pat Neil's fellow-sufferers are here conscientiously reported as they occurred. The famous leap is given, as nearly as memory could preserve it, in Pat's identical words. The names of the different individuals that bear any part in the story belonged in reality to their prototypes, with the exception of the O'Brien and Roche families, and two or three individuals whose real names the compiler of the chronicle does not feel himself at liberty to reveal.

Father James, p. 177.

This chapter is a contraction of one of the papers in the "Legends of Mount Leinster." As the most interesting portions of that collection are intended to be republished in a sequel to the present work, and as their scene lies in the Duffrey, it seems expedient to transfer the sketch of the good clergyman and his elysium from that distant part of the country to his own neighbourhood.

Inedited Memoirs of Dean Swift, p. 211.

We have here an instance of venerable jokes and deeds of nameless or forgotten characters attributed to a popular personage such as the Dean of St. Patrick's still continues to be.

Dhroghedy's March, p. 231.

This name is more probably a corruption of *Draoid*, a Druid, or *Draoidheacht*, Druidic magic, than of Drogheda. That town gets its name from *Droichiod*, a bridge.

Deers, p. 237.

Joanna without a doubt inspected the arms in question, but not being well up in natural history or heraldry, made a very natural mistake in the names of the supporters.

Moll the Smith, p. 250.

This determined gossip did not in reality wield sledge or fasten horse-shoe. She merely exercised conjugal authority over the village artist, and had a terrible tongue of her own. The expression is a good instance of the habit of contraction in such general use in town and country. The servants of the two clergymen in our neighbourhood were never called any name but "Jemmy the priest," and "Pat the minister." Bryan's house-dog enjoyed the style and title of *Tiger Roche*.

Woodcut at page 260.

This figure was called the "Eight points of knavery." A curious reader, taking pencil in hand, and keeping his eyes intent on the figure, may readily delineate it without removing the point of the instrument from the paper. This hint may probably enable him to execute Dr. Kelly's problem.

Moll Doyle and her daughters, p. 272.

The members of a secret society of that day, which now and then were heard of by their deeds, were distinguished by the above name. Individuals dwelling in the county of Carlow were generally called on to adjust differences which occurred between landlord and tenant in our county.

M. G. R., p. 326.

The mention of this truthful and sprightly delineator of Wexford country life (see *Irish Penny Journal*, 1841) presents an opportunity for congratulating our native county on being the birth-place of Lady Wilde, Mrs. S. C. Hall, and the authoress of "Yaxley and its Neighbourhood," "Dora Bouverie," &c. The literary world is thoroughly aware of the poetical gifts of Lady Wilde; and of Mrs. Hall's excellencies as a writer of fiction it is scarcely necessary to speak. The authoress of "Yaxley and its Neighbourhood," if we mistake not, will ere long take rank beside Mrs. Gaskell and Miss Jewsbury.

GLOSSARY OF WORDS

CHIEFLY DERIVED FROM THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

CORRUPT expressions (not directly derived from the native language) whose meanings are apparent from the context, are not here explained. Some of the explanations of proper names are conjectural. The writer will thankfully receive any sound information on the subject. The correct Irish name is placed after that which is used in the text. *C* has uniformly the hard sound of *k*, and *g* that of *g* in *got:* the final *e* is always sounded. *Bh* or *mh* is pronounced *v*. *Ch* has a guttural sound in every instance. This glossary contains the names of several villages and townlands mentioned in the story; and as these names in every instance indicate the natural features of the locality, or some circumstance connected with its discovery or first settlement, the study is not unworthy of the attention of the historian or archæologist.

Achudh, *a chuid*, O (my) share! a term of endearment.

Achsalach. See *Och-na-Goppal*.

Alanna, *a leanbh*, O (my) child!

Aodh (pron. *ee*), Hugh. Mackay, Mackie, Machugh, McKay, and Hewson are identical with *Mac Aoidh*, Son of Hugh.

Asthore, *a stor*, O (my) treasure!

Bally, *baile*, town or village, home, clan, tribe; *bealach*, road-way, pass, inlet; *buaile*, fold, place for milking cows. These words enter largely into the composition of local names. *Ocras* is hunger, *ochras*, fish-gills; so *Ballynocrish* may mean town of hunger or town of fish-gills. *Dorcha* is dark; *Booladhurragha* is either dark pass, or dark cattle-fold. Boolavogue is probably Mogue's cow-pen; *bo*, cow, forming part of the word. *Ballybawn* is fair town, or fair pass, or it may mean the pass of the track. As cattle were and are still driven up to the mountains in summer, the last is apparently the best explanation—the village lying at the entrance of the common of Cooliagh, or White Mountain.

Bantry, *Beanntraighe*, Fair Strand. As the barony is several miles from any strand, the original name was probably *Beanntriatha*,

fair hills; its chief one, Cooliagh, is still called the White Mountain. The following mention is made of it in the ancient topographical poem of O'Duggan and Heerin:—

"From the *Bearbha* (Barrow) to the *Slaine* eastwards
Is the extent of the territory of the *Clann Coscraigh* (Cosgrave),—
The host of *Beanntraighe* of the curling locks,
The hawk-eyed, slow-eyed, warlike host."

Bargy. *Bargo* means maritime district. It is also called in old MSS. *Feirann deiscertach*, southern land.

Bawn, *ban*, means common, also field; hence large yard; *Bawnoge* (young field), village green.

Bochach, *bacach*, lame, a lame person.

Bonyeen, *banabh*, young pig.

Booltheen, from *buail*, (imp. mood) strike, the arm of the flail not held in the hands.

Boro, *Borb*, fierce, rough, the very character of the commencement of the river.

Bouchal, *buachaill* (properly cow-herd, from *bo*, a cow), boy, youth; *bouchal* na gruaga dhowna (*gruag*, hair; *donn*, brown), boy with the brown hair.

Bouilly bawn (*builin*, loaf; *ban*, white), white loaf. *Ban*, a woman, truth, light, white, sparkling; *Fion*, fair, renowned; The Hebrew *bahin*, and the English *fine* have all evidently the same root.

Bunclody, now Newtownbarry; *bun*, bottom; *Clody*, the name of a small stream falling into the Slaney at the upper end of the beautiful village. *Clody* means muddy.

Bui, *buidhe*, yellow.

Cahir, Charles.

Caol, slender.

Caroline, beaver hat.

Cauth, Catherine.

Ceann, head.

Clonroche (*cluain*, pasture; *rocach*, rocky; *rocas*, a rook), rocky pasture, or crow's pasture, or Roche's pasture.

Cloughbawn (*cloch*, stone), white stone.

Cnoc-na-cro, *Cnoc-an-crock*, hill of the gallows.

Colaght, *coille*, woody; woody district.

Colleen, *cailin*, a young girl.

Colliagh, *cailleach*, old woman; properly a nun, from *caille*, a veil.

Coolbawn (*coill*, a wood; *cuil*, a retired place), fair wood.

Coolcul, lonely wood, or Cumhal's wood.

Cooliagh. This mountain probably got its name from the woods formerly covering its eastern side.

Coolege, young wood.

Courtnacuddy, Cuddihy's court.

Crith, *Cruit*, a hump; it also means a harp.

Crubeen, *crub*, foot of a quadruped, claw of a bird ;—pig's foot in the text.

Curraghgraigue (*currach*, bog, plain ; *graigh*, herd of horses), plain of the herds.

Cumulum ; *cumal*, a female slave ; one employed at turning a *quern* (hand-mill), a hood. The dance perhaps was performed to the melody of a quern-song or tune in ancient times.

Cups and *English Reds*, superior and inferior kinds of potatoes.

Dharg or Derg, *dearg*, red.

Dheega, *dig*, dyke ; *Bet-na-dheega*, Betty of the dyke.

Dhialath (*Dia*, God ; leat, i.e. *le*, with ; thu, thee), "God be with thee," a drinking pledge.

Dhieux, corruption of Devereux.

Dhu, *dubh*, black.

Dick Shones Phoor. Dick being from Forth or Bargy, perhaps his name implies Dick, son of John or Johnes, son of Poer or Power.

Dhurnoge, *dornog*, large leather gauntlet used by faggot-cutters.

Duffrey, *Dubhthoire*, *dubh toir*, dark cemetery ; or *dubh toirb*, peat. Templeshanbo furnishes the cemetery, and there was no scarcity of turf for fuel either in the great hill-bason of Cummor, or down nearer the noisy Glasha. The following lines mentioning the district are taken from O'Duggan and Heerin's topographical poem :—

> "Another high noble tribe,
> The Siol Braoin, people of the Dubhthoire ;
> They have not got a portion of the plain of Corc,—
> The Saxons from the middle of the garden."

The Siol Braoin (O'Byrne family) have left their name to the barony of Shelburne.

Enniscorthy (*Inis*, island ; *coirthe*, a pillar stone ; *ceart*, justice, right, small, pointed, toll, pebble ; *cortas*, debt ; *coirteadh*, a jury). The meaning may be—the isle of the court-house, or of the tribute, or of the standing stone, or the small, pointed island. The isle in the Slaney is but a small one, and it had pointed extremities—half a century ago at least.

Fadh, long.

Forth. This barony seems to have taken its name from a chief called *Fothairt* of the Cairn (Carnsore), who was a descendant of *Achy Finn Fothairt*, brother of "Conn of the hundred battles." There are also in the Irish language some other not inapplicable titles for it, viz. *fortha*, a seat ; *forthan*, plenty ; *fortas*, straw, litter. The fertility of the land is proverbial, and of bean-straw there is no lack. See the interesting work on this barony and its dialect by the late Mr. Jacob Poole, edited by the learned Rev. Wm. Barnes, author of "Poems in the Dorsetshire Dialect," and lately published by Mr. John Russell Smith, Soho-square, London.

Gaach, an exploit; to cut a gaach, to make a display; probably from *Gaiscidh* or *gaisgeach*, a hero.

Geochach, *geocach*, a stroller, glutton, spendthrift.

Girodh, Gearoidh, or Garret, a corruption of Gerald.

Glanmuin (*Glenn*, glen; *Muin* or *Muine*, the thorn tree, muinn, a wood), glen of thorns, or woody glen. *Moin* is a bog.

Gorsoon, *Gasan*, the representative of the Anglo-Norman garçon.

Gow, *Gobha*, smith; *crestha*, probably from *crostacht*, perverseness; shromach, *sramach*, blear-eyed. These epithets well fitted two of our neighbouring smiths—long since at rest.

Gra Gal machree, *gradh geal mo croidhe*, love bright of my heart.

Gracy, *Greasaidhe*, shoe-maker, *brogue*-maker in the text.

Graigue, *Graig*, manor or village; *manach*, a monk; *Graigue-na-manha*, village of the monks.

Grange has its origin from *Grianan* (*Grian*, the sun), summer-house, royal mansion, sunny chamber of the Gaelic ladies of old days, sheltered walk on a hill.

Gurm, *Gorm*, blue. James Kelly was called *Shamus Gurm* from the bluish-black hue of the lower part of his face.

Inch, *Inis*, properly an island; applied to meadows by river sides.

Kaim, probably *Ceim*, a step, a degree, a rise.

Kilanne (*Ceall*, church), St. Anne's church.

Kilaughrim (*coill*, wood; *ath*, ford; *ramachd*, rowing), perhaps the wood of the ferry; *ruaim* is a fishing line, also the alder tree, hence the wood of the fishing, or of the alder-ford.

Killeen, *cillin*, a little cell; an old grave-yard.

Knocmore (*cnoc*, hill; *mōr*, large), large hill.

Launa Vaula, *lan-a-mhala*, literally, "full of the bag," display, festivity.

Lude, ashamed; probably from the German *leiden*, to suffer.

Macamores (*Mac*, son; *muir*, the sea), inhabitants of the Wexford sea coast.

Mam, the breast; the hollow between the breasts; hence a mountain side or a defile.

Mangan, *meangan*, bough, twig, osier. Mangan is close on the wood of Kilaughrim, and has the Urrin for boundary.

Maudlin, *Madeleine*, eastern suburb of New Ross; probably so called from a church dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen in former days.

Mauyaidh, Maude, Margaret.

Miel, *maol*, hornless, when applied to beasts; bald as respects men; noble, a tonsured person; *Maolmuire*, Mary's servant (in religion); *Maolseachluin*, St. Sechnal's servant.

Millia Mollocht, *mile mollachd*, thousand curses.

Moghurry (*Magh*, field; *urraid* or *urraigh*, chief or prince), Prince's field or plain.

Mogue, *Mo Aodh Oge*, My (lord) young Hugh. Mogue is commonly but improperly substituted for Moses.

Money, *muinn*, a wood. Monamolin (*muillean*, a mill), wood of the

mill. Monamuch (*muc* a pig), swine's-wood. Moneyhore (*urraigh* a chief), chief's-wood. Moneytummer (*tobhar*, a well), the wood of the well. *Moin*, is a bog.

Moynart (*Magh*, field ; *neart*, power), field of power ; perhaps *Magh an Airt*, (King) Art's plain.

Naboclish (*ni* or *na*, not ; *bocadh*, discussion of a matter ; *leis* with it), "never mind it"—an interjectional expression.

Natch, the side of a box-bed farthest from the wall.

Och-na-goppal (*Ath*, ford ; *capall* or *capull*, a horse), Horseford. *Gobhar*, a goat ; *Och-na-gour*, Goat's-ford ; *Achsalach*, muddy ford.

Oonah, probably *Aoine*, Venus, music, abstinence, the moon, the sea, delight. It gets the meaning of abstinence from Friday being a fast day as well as Venus's day ; a very strange combination !

Pleidhogue, *fleadh*, a feast.

Prapeen, *pracas*, mixture of oatenmeal and milk.

Puttha beg, *'sa puttha mor*, *'sa yarra futtha* ('s for *agus* and), the little pot, and the big pot, and the middling pot—corrupt version. *Putraicc* is the proper equivalent for pot.

Raimshach, *reimse*, club or staff,—a tall upright stone on the southern slope of the White Mountain, near the road leading from Templeudigan into the county of Carlow by the old cemetery of St. Mullins. These standing stones or *dallans* were set up where heroes were interred, and sometimes they served for objects of worship, or boundary-marks to lands.

Rathnure (*rath*, fort ; *nuar*, sorrow), fort of sorrow ; *Rathduff*, black fort ; *Rathphelim*, Phelim's fort.

Rinka, *rince*, a dance ; *Rinka fadha*, long dance.

Ross, *ros*, arable land, a promontory, a wood.

Scobie, *sguab*, a sheaf or besom. Scobie is still a fertile townland, and of course plentiful in sheaves.

Scollagh, *scoltadh*, a rift or cleft ; the picturesque pass between Blackstairs and Mount Leinster.

Scradheen, *scraidin*, a diminutive, worthless fellow.

Sha gu dein, "It is even so ;" interrogatively, "Is it so ?" "Is that the case ?"

Shebal, *siobhal*, a thorn or pin ; *siubhal*, motion or walking—a woman's name ; Eliza is its substitute.

Sheela, Celia.

Shudurth, *sud ort* (*air*, on ; *thu*, thee), here's to you ! a drinking pledge.

Skiach, *sciath*, *sgiat*, a flat basket, an ancient shield of wicker work covered with strong leather.

Slaney, *slainte*, health ; slanadh, healing ; the chief river of Wexford.

Taghmon (*teagh*, a house ; *Munn*, a contraction for Edmund), Edmund's house.

Templeudigan, St. Udigan's church near the south-western extremity of the White Mountain.

Thotheen, a corruption of toast, snuff.

Threenacheala, *ceann le cheile*, "the head with the shin bone;" confusion.

Thubber, *tobar*, a spring well; *thubber gal*, clear spring; *thubber dharg*, red spring.

Tomanearly, *tuam or tuaim an Iarla*, tomb of the Earl; Tomenine, probably *tuam ann eanach*, fort in the marsh; Thomnamulloge, *tuam na mbulog*, burial place or fort of the oxen; *Tombrick*, town or fort of the salmon; *tuam* or *tuaim* having the different meanings of burial place, town, fortified place, village, and fence.

Urrin, *urran*, strife, contention, a befitting name for the river which runs from Blackstairs to meet the Slaney, a little way below Enniscorthy. It has a considerable decline for a mile or two from its source, hence its tumbling, brawling character.

Vanithee, (*ban*, woman; *teagh*, house), mistress of the house.

Wexford has received its name from the Scandinavian *Weissforthe* or *fiord*, white haven, probably from the white strand which stretches along the eastern side of the harbour opposite to the town. Its Gaelic name was *Loch Carmain*, Lake of Carmen (a Celtic goddess).

NOTE.—If any tradition yet remains in Bantry of a person who resembled *Nicholas MacCracken* in entertaining views above his state of life, in cultivating genteel deportment, and in selecting fine words for ordinary occasions, let it be distinctly understood that the resemblance is strictly limited to these particulars. The writer of this book is not aware of any unworthy action or expression for which that personage was ever held responsible by common report.

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The Warder.

"What the brothers Grimm did for Germany, and Hans Andersen for Denmark, Mr. Kennedy has now done for Ireland, and no light task is that which he has accomplished. . . . The happy manner in which he has rendered the idioms and expressions common to our country, adds considerably to the amusement the tales afford. . . . The author has rendered much service to Irish literature by the rescue of these tales from the oblivion into which a few more years of neglect would have hopelessly plunged them. The task was one requiring not only great talent and discernment, but great patience and perseverance, qualities of which the author possesses no mean share."

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"This is to us the most interesting volume that has issued from the Press within the last quarter of a century at least. It is well to

and that there survives at least one Irishman from beyond the dark period of the famine, treasuring in memory those old world relics—gifted with the power to transfer them to paper in such a way as that they retain with the most vivid freshness all their ancient features. We tender our thanks to Mr. Kennedy for the preservation of these tales, which otherwise would have ceased to be known in the land."

The Limerick Chronicle.

"Since the publication of Thomas Crofton Croker's Legends, and Keightley's Fairy Mythology, no such attractive work of Irish folk-lore and household fiction has appeared as the present. When we compare it with the above works, however, we must decidedly give it the preference for the comprehensive variety and local interest of its multifarious fairy tales, ghost stories, witchcraft, sorcery, fetches, and diablerie of every kind. The style is so natural that it will bring back to many of us the most pleasing reminiscences of our childhood: and at the same time the author's repertory has been so well filled from all our archæological stores, especially those more recently developed by our great Irish scholars, that the more learned and fastidious reader will find something to attract his attention, and add to his store of knowledge. The book is in short quite a gem in its way."

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